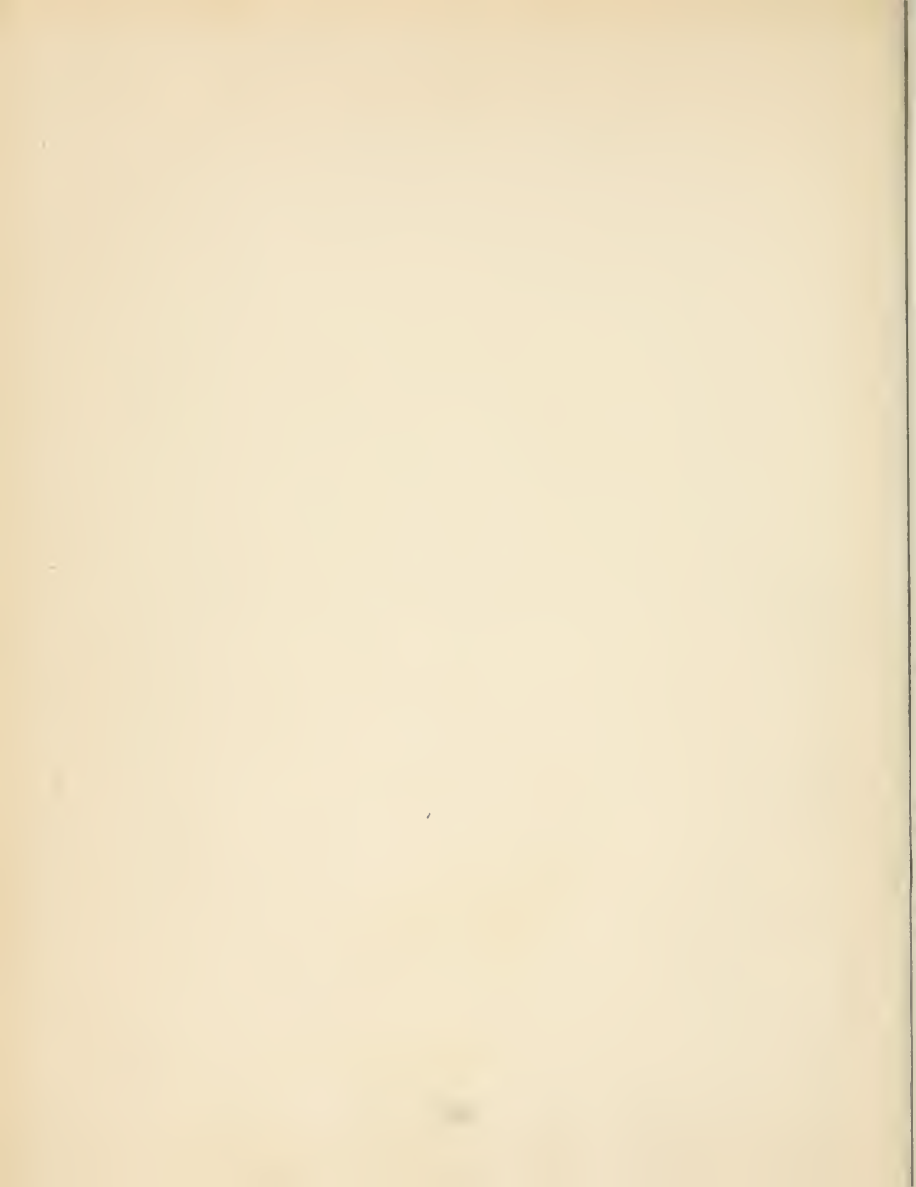






ROUMANIA IN
LIGHT & SHADOW







THE AUTHOR.

ROUMANIA IN
LIGHT & SHADOW

By ETHEL GREENING PANTAZZI

T. FISHER UNWIN LTD
LONDON: ADELPHI TERRACE

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ERRATA

Page 16—Line 11:

For "*Americana*"—read "*Americanca*", et seq.

Page 18—Line 32:

"*Excellency*"—Note "*Excelleney*" is the nearest English equivalent for the honorific *Domnavostra*, used by inferiors and strangers. Members of a family and intimates employ the familiar "*thee*" and "*thou*", as in French.

Page 25—Line 27:

For "*Museel*"—read "*Muschel*". "*Muscel*" is the Roumanian spelling, but the English forms of names have been used throughout for facility in pronunciation.

Page 32—Line 34:

For "*Margarietta*"—read "*Margherita*."

Page 35—Line 24:

After "*twiea*," read (plum brandy).

Page 56—Line 25:

For "*smuntans*" read "*smantana*."

Page 61—Line 1:

After "*resort*"—read: "*and a country fair is in progress at present.*"

Page 65—Line 23:

For "*desjeuners*" read "*dejeuners*."

Page 68—Line 18:

After "*Lautari*"—read (gypsy musicians).

Page 68—Line 3:

After "*boyars*"—read "(lords)."

Page 72—Line 12:

Before "*quarters*" read "*one of the*"

Page 77—Line 17:

For "are" read "is."

Page 78—Line 12:

For "stationiere" read "stationaire."

Page 78—Line 17:

For "Ynenbourg" read "Ysenbourg."

Page 97—Line 31:

For "Saltraisca" read "Sa traisca."

Page 112—Line 2:

For "caviare" read "caviar."

Page 136—Line 21:

For "Mahai Bravul, the Great Stephen," read "Mihai Bravul, the Great Michael."

Page 137—Line 3:

For "such" read "so much."

Page 158—Line 7:

For "Saguna" (Roumanian spelling) read "Shaguna."

Page 171—Line 1:

For "we" read "B."

Page 171—Line 5:

After "returning"—read "to the station."

Page 196—Line 16:

For Period read Comma.

Page 243—Line 9:

For "Gospodim"—read "Gospodin."

On Sketch Map facing page 1 heavy black line indicates routes of automobile trip described in book.

TO
MY FATHER

*A footfall there
Suffices to upturn to the warm air
Half germinating spices, mere decay
Produces richer life, and day by day
New pollen on the lily-petal grows,
And still more labyrinthine buds the rose.*

R. BROWNING.

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PART I
LIGHT

CHAPTER I

APRIL-AUGUST 1909

FIRST IMPRESSIONS—A LITTLE HISTORY—STORY OF STEFAN—SETTLING
IN NEW HOME—VISITS—HOUSEHOLD DETAILS—MARKETS—WED-
DING CUSTOMS—BEAR MASSAGE—FORTUNE-TELLING—DREAMS—
PAPARUDE.

GALATZ, APRIL 1909.

YESTERDAY morning we awoke at Predeal, a little town in the Carpathians, just on the borderline between Hungary and Roumania. Bright sunshine greeted us. On looking eagerly out of the car window I saw on the station platform a lively crowd of peasants clad in gaily embroidered garments. Shepherds in tall pointed sheep-skin caps and shaggy fur mantles made a striking picture, their grave demeanour an effective contrast to the animation of the dark-eyed girls with red flowers in their plaited hair.

"Is it like this every day?" I queried, feeling as if we had front seats in a theatre.

"No, this is Easter, and everyone has a three-day holiday," was the reply.

Later, as the train went along, we could see the "hora," a slow, swaying round dance, in progress on all the village greens to the music of the violin and flute. Small "ferris" wheels, made of wood and looking perilously frail, were revolving with burdens of laughing swains and maidens. In front of the little white cabarets, tables were set in the open air, where the older villagers were sipping wine, smoking cigarettes and solemnly, silently surveying the dancers.

On arriving at our destination my husband sent to his former landlady, the widow of General K., asking to have the uniforms left in her care brought to him by the orderly. Inside half an hour the man arrived, bearing a gift of welcome for me from this kind lady. It was a "kossanak," a cylindrical cake about a foot and a half high, and set on a round dish, surrounded with painted Easter eggs and decorated with red carnations. Mihai, himself, shyly offered me a bunch of fragrant, dried sweet basil, brought from his distant mountain home expressly for the "Americana," and destined to ensure my happiness—a propitious beginning for my new life.

During the series of charming parties given for us by hospitable Galatzites, I have found that the Roumanians are sensitive about having their country referred to as a "Balkan State." They consider it a Latin island in a sea of Slavdom. Certainly the physical characteristics of the Roumanians bear out this statement, as they are short and dark, with round heads, and, as a general rule, entirely different from the fair, tall, blue-eyed Slavs of Serbia or Russia. They are eager to tell me about their history, and there is plenty of time, for I have never known such prolonged affairs, except formal balls at home. These evening gatherings begin very late, it is true, but it never occurs to anyone to break up a party, no matter how informal, until 2 a.m. Everyone speaks French, so that I was not too much at a loss.

I have learned that Roumania was ancient Dacia, the "Dacia Felix" of the Roman poets. Over eighteen hundred years ago the inhabitants were conquered by the Roman Legions of the Emperor Trajan. Then colonists were sent from Italy, intermarried with the Dacians, and were the ancestors of the Roumanians of to-day. The high degree of culture reached in Dacia during the hundred and fifty years following the Roman Conquest is attested by interesting archæological remains.

Constantza, the modern Black Sea port, was the ancient Tomis, the place of Ovid's exile. During the latter years of the Roman Empire, Eastern Europe was overrun by hordes of savage barbarians from Asia. In the Middle Ages it was the battleground of Christianity against the Turks, but accounts of those days are confused and obscure.

Professor K. tells me that long oppression under Turkish rule has left its impression strongly on the people, but though cut off from the centre of civilization for centuries, they have preserved the legends of their forefathers, transmitting them even to-day by word of mouth. They confuse Pagan and Christian traditions, mixing them inextricably in their long Homeric poems and stories, the most thrilling of which are about the "Haiduks." These were gentlemen highway-robbers, like unto the English Robin Hood, who, in the days of Phanariote rule, lived with bands of followers in the forests and robbed the rich to give to the poor. During the long winter-evening "sheasziatoare" (lit. sitting-parties), the women spin and embroider, and all take part in recitals of the great deeds of ancient days.

They have preserved the cult of their heroes and martyrs in the names of their children—Constantin (the first Christian Emperor) comes first among the favourite names for boys; Ion (John), Nicolai (the good Christmas "St. Nicholas"), Demetru, Grigore (the saint, whose Gregorian chants are famous) are popular. For girls, Ileana (or Helen), Maria, Ecaterina and Sophia preserve traditions of saintly women; Cleopatra, Calypso, Urania and Thalia bring Pagan days to memory. Florica (little flower), Smaranda (emerald), are other poetic names commonly used. Coming to later days, Sherban, Radu, Barbu, Dan, Vlad and Stefan are names of kings and heroes of their very own. Of Stefan the Great, who reigned about the middle of the fifth century, he told

me a story which ranks worthily, to my mind, with those of the early Roman Republic. Stefan, defeated after many mighty battles against the Turks, returns by night, wounded, to his moated castle, of which his mother had been the guardian and defender during his absence. The bridge is up. He signals to the sentinel to lower it and let him in. On hearing this demand his mother, Oltea, comes to an upper window and calls out to know who is there.

"'Tis I, Stefan, your son—wounded, pursued; let me in!"

"Impostor! How dare you claim to be my son? *He* is either dead or conqueror!"

Stefan returned to fight once more, and this time was victorious, later uniting all the provinces of Greater Roumania under his beneficent sway.

JULY, STRADA CAROL 8.

Our furniture has arrived from England at last, and we are having an exciting time unpacking and getting settled. We slept last night for the first time under our own roof. No kitchen is installed as yet. When I came out of my room prepared to go to a café for breakfast, I found a tray on the hall table all set with coffee, clotted cream and kossanak. Even a rose was lying on the fringed napkin. Much astonished, I asked Mihai, the orderly (briefly, *very* briefly, as my Roumanian is shaky): "Where did this come from?"

"Madame General K. sent it. I carried it from her house two blocks away."

"But how did she know I was here?" I asked, much surprised.

"She doesn't, yet. I thought she would not want your Excellency to go out so early, so I went to her kitchen, prepared it, and brought it myself. She was not up, but she will be delighted when she knows," was the reply.



HOTEL MÉTROPOLE IN GALATI

To face p. 18

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I was touched not a little by a curious incident which occurred when we left the hotel. The housekeeper, a respectable Transylvanian, had become interested in me, although we could not converse at all. When she knew I was going, she came mysteriously into my room carrying a tray on which were a piece of bread, a salt-cellar full of salt, a bottle and a small whisk. By dramatic signs she showed me that on arriving at the threshold of my new home I must put some salt on the bread, break it, and give half to my husband. We must eat it together. Then from the bottle I must scatter drops of holy water (she made the sign of the Cross over the bottle to show me it was blessed) on the whisk and sprinkle the doorsteps with it before entering. She made a neat parcel of the magic symbols of future happiness, and kissed my hands with tears as she pressed it upon me. B., unromantic creature! would not perform the ceremony, but I am treasuring the holy water as a souvenir. My passion for souvenirs amuses our friends—they say it must be an American characteristic!

Later.

We have been making our first visits; for here the new arrivals or newly married call on those with whom they wish to have relations, instead of receiving first. B. was much shocked when he observed me bowing to men acquaintances we met in the street. "You must wait till they bow to you," he instructed me. It is easier than our way, after all! I rather like having my hand kissed: it puts one in an atmosphere of romance—for the moment, at least! I often feel here as if I had been transported suddenly to the fifteenth century!

No one can visit a house, even for a few minutes, without being offered some refreshment, a custom of Turkish origin, I believe. The usual or first thing offered is a *dulceatza*. This is a spoonful of a delicious conserve,

with a glass of water. The manufacturing of these dulceatzas is a fine art, and housewives pride themselves on their skill in making certain varieties, which are the specialties of their households. The process of making them is slow and painstaking; each strawberry, raspberry, or plum, as the case may be, is closely inspected and tested before it is cooked. My favourite dulceatza is made of rose leaves, but there is an infinite variety; one of a lovely mauve colour, and delicately perfumed, is made of plum skins. After the dulceatza, Turkish coffee is offered in miniature cups without handles, then sweet dessert wine; something seems coming in all the time. Habitually, tea is served in the evening *à la Russe*. Roumanians like it sweet. I have put as many as seven lumps in one glass.

Another household art is the monthly washing. The laundress is an important personage, well aware of her own worth. Her wages do not exceed fifty cents a day, but in addition she expects frequent presents of clothes, shoes, etc., and requires the services of an "ajutor" (aider) to bring her frequent "cafelutzas" (little coffees) and tit-bits to sustain her in her labours; also to replenish her charecoal-heated iron when she is pleating and frilling—a delicate operation requiring concentration and much skill. These women are usually employed in two houses, where they work ten to twelve days a month each, resting at home in the intervals. The linen is soaked overnight in suds made of fine olive-oil soap (the kind from Smyrna is highly esteemed); then the following morning each article is carefully folded and put into the "cazan"—a large vat standing on four short, stumpy legs. In order to arrange the linen in it, the laundress is obliged to mount on a box or footstool. Then a bag of fine wood ashes is attached near the top and a pan put underneath the vat. When all is ready the assistants (at least two) are called in, and the process

of pouring about a hundred pails of cold water over the clothes is begun—the three taking turns in drawing the water, passing and pouring it. Washed like this, the clothes come out white as snow and last for ever—an important consideration where handsewn and embroidered linen is the rule. Several brides from families of moderate means of my acquaintance had a dozen dozens (144) of everything in personal and household linen in their marriage chests.

AUGUST.

The markets are very animated in the early mornings and are a constant source of interest to me. The vegetables piled mountain high; the lively geese and chickens held by nets in round, shallow baskets; the thick sour cream (yahourt); the little cakes, powdered with poppy seeds; the luscious plums and golden apricots; the queer cucumbers pickled in brine in their huge glass jars; the brown tomato paste, ladled out with wooden spades; the hundreds of cheap knick-knacks spread on the pavement on bright coloured cloths; the lively bargaining; the jostling of the cosmopolitan crowd—the whole scene is fascinating and novel to Western eyes. I cannot resist the booths, full of frail pottery kitchen utensils, often of artistic shapes and naïvely decorated. The wooden spoons, quaintly shaped baskets and bundles of sweet-smelling herbs are my ruin!

Even in the shops there are no fixed prices, and a great deal of time and energy are consumed in bargaining. One day last week I was passing along a street, followed by Mihai, who was carrying a parcel for me, when, seeing some brushes and brooms for sale in a shop-window, I decided to go in and buy some, bidding Mihai wait for me outside. The shopkeeper saw I was a foreigner and asked three times the usual price for the articles I picked out. I went to the door and called Mihai;

pointing to the brushes, I enumerated the prices. He looked incredulous; then said, entreatingly: "Let your Excellency return home—I will do the buying." I left him shaking the brushes in the man's face, and was presently gratified to see him arrive with three of them, which he had bought for the price asked of me for one.

Later in August.

We have just returned from a visit to Campul Lung (i.e. The Long Field), in the district of Muschel. True to name, Campul Lung lies nestled in a long narrow valley on the bank of a swift river. The air is balmy with aromatic perfume wafted from the pine groves thickly planted on the hill-sides. At a single stride one can step over the clear streamlets which trickle musically over the cobble stones of the steep streets intersecting the valley. Health and plenty must surely cheer the labouring swain in such a spot. It adds much to the interest of travelling in Roumania to see the peasants wearing the national costume, as each district has some distinctive details in dress. In towns, unfortunately, one sees more "store clothes" than those charmingly becoming hand-made costumes of the olden days.

St. Peter and St. Paul's day in this month is an important match-making festival, and our friends had invited us in order to give the opportunity of seeing the "hora," in which peasant girls of marriageable age (fifteen upwards) are allowed to take part. No married person can participate. These dances are organized by the bachelors (flaciu) of the district, who exert themselves to put vim and gaiety into the festivity. On this occasion the dance took place on a big field just outside the town. A circle is formed in which a hundred or more dancers join hands and sway rhythmically from side to side, varying the step and *tempo* of the dance in obedience to the leader's directions. Three



PEASANTS DANCING THE "HORA."

or four circles dance at the same time. The musicians, mounted on boxes, are stationed outside the circle. The men and girls do not necessarily alternate in couples; sometimes three or four girls or men dance side by side. Other dances, usually fast and furious ones, are performed by couples in the interval of the regular "hora," which is repeated as often as a sufficient number of dancers are ready to begin. With a politeness which was delightfully natural and unostentatious I was escorted, with my friends, to the centre of a circle, where I could see clearly all that was going on. The effect was like looking into a kaleidoscope—the prismatic glowing colours shifting into new and charming patterns with every movement of the dance.

The young men wear tight, white woollen trousers, wrinkled to the ankle, and snowy white shirts, belted in tightly at the waist by a red girdle ("brio"), below which the ample pleats hang like a short skirt, giving them somewhat the silhouette one has seen pictured on Persian tiles. Their waists are decidedly small, while the women's dress does not at all accentuate the waist-line. Over the shirts they have sleeveless vests of soft white sheepskin, gaily embroidered in intricate patterns with red and black silks. On their feet they wear opineiu, a sort of leather sandal laced with thongs, over thick white woollen socks. In shape these opineiu much resemble the moccasins worn by North American Indians, but they are stiff, not soft and pliable like the moccasin. A rose stuck jauntily behind an ear, and soft, round felt hat set at a becoming angle, complete their costume for gala occasions like this.

The girls wear costumes they have spent the previous year in weaving and embroidering, and red flowers in their uncovered hair. They have "salbas," gold pieces, which are part of their dot, suspended on black velvet

ribbons about their necks and wrists. Once married, they put on the marama, a becoming veil covering the hair and draped under the chin, the ends falling to the ankles in the back. I noticed that education was spreading, as some of the girls had embroidered "1—2—3" and "A—B—C" in bands on their skirts!

We were lucky in seeing a wedding in Campul Lung also, and I learned many details of the customs in connection with the ceremony. The Sunday before the date fixed for the wedding the bridegroom, accompanied by chosen friends, goes around the neighbourhood to invite the guests, followed by gipsies playing on violins, "cobze," and other curious string instruments. They carry with them a round, flat wooden bottle full of *tzwiea* (the national drink made of fermented plum juice), and the verbal invitation is accompanied by mutual health-drinkings. The bride in the meantime is arranging her wedding-chest, full of linen spun and embroidered by herself, and quilts (*plapuma*) for which she has carded the wool. Piles of square pillows of varying sizes, stuffed with the finest white down, form an important part of the trousseau. In this connection, I understand now the look of utter amazement and scorn on the face of the housemaid when she detected a *grey* feather escaping through the ticking of one of my pillows the other day. I was lowered for ever in her esteem. I'm sure the scandal spread throughout the neighbourhood!

The gift of the prospective bridegroom to his fiancée is almost invariably a pair of ear-rings—diamonds if he can afford them. Engagement-rings have no meaning, as from the time of the engagement wedding-rings are worn, which are exchanged during the marriage ceremony.

Long engagements are unknown. The marriage almost invariably takes place in church the eighth or fifteenth day after the formal betrothal. The wedding ceremony

is performed on a raised round platform in front of the altar screen. In place of bridesmaids there are the godmother and godfather—sometimes the ones who acted at the christening of the bride or groom. They hold thick, flower-decorated candles five feet high. At a certain part in the ceremony silver or gold circlets or wreaths of flowers are placed like crowns on the heads of the bridal couple, and joining hands with the priest and godparents, they walk slowly three times around the altar. As the crowns are tied together at the back with a white ribbon and the candles are never relinquished, this moment has a constrained effect, to say the least. Every effort is made to keep the wedding candles alight until they can kindle the icon lamp's first flame in the new home. For the first time the bride's hand is kissed by the men of the party. At the reception following the wedding, instead of wedding-cake, bags of sugar-coated almonds are distributed to the guests and sent to absent friends.

In some districts at weddings and in others at Easter-time a curious dramatic dance is performed, which represents the old Roman story of the Rape of the Sabine Women. The performers are all men, though a number of them represent the Sabine women. Even to the uninitiated the story can be clearly followed. The dancers wear tiny bells attached to their ankles.

While in Musee I learned that the peasants have a strange faith in bear massage as a cure for rheumatism and kindred diseases. The patient lies down on the bare ground, and the gipsy master of the bear guides the animal by a chain, attached to a ring through its nose, while it dances clumsily on the sick man's back to the music of a big home-made tambourine.

Fortune-telling by cards is a mania, and has often helped the police to elicit confessions from criminals. The gipsies are greatly in request as fortune-

tellers and as musicians at festivities. Dreams and their interpretation also play a very large part in the life of the peasant and determine important affairs, such as buying and selling of cattle. My sewing-woman's husband has gone to try his luck in America, and she has not heard of him for a long time and seemed very depressed. The other day I found her singing and quite gay and cheerful. I asked her what had happened. She said: "I had a dream last night, and thought I was at home in the country. My mother called my brother and myself to take a roll of linen she had woven to put on the meadow grass to bleach. We each took an end. It was so long that my brother disappeared in the distance with his end; the whole piece was perfect, without a flaw. This dream means a good journey and safe return of a loved one; therefore I am certain my husband will succeed and return for me."

In a land where life or death depends on the harvest, it is natural that every means possible should be resorted to in order to bring rain when drought threatens to parch the corn, and the practice of sympathetic magic in this connection is a tradition from remote antiquity. Here the tzigane play an important part. Adorned with branches of trees, which cover even their faces, the "paparude" (young gipsy girls) go from house to house. As they enter each courtyard the master of the house seizes a pail of water and gives them a thorough sousing by violently emptying all the contents of his pail on the heads of as many as he can. Of course, they have to be rewarded for submitting to the bath—not unlikely their only one in the year!

One hot day I was calling on a lady here. She was complaining about the bad prospects for the crops. She wished to make a trip abroad, but feared that the failure of the harvest would prevent her doing so, as all her income came from her cornfields. Just at that moment



PRINCE NICOLAI IN ROMANIAN PEASANT COSTUME IN 1909.

we heard a raucous voice calling out in front of the window. It was a couple of "paparude." My hostess paused not for breath; she precipitately left me, and a few seconds later I saw her issue forth from a back entrance with a pail of water, which she dashed vigorously on the girls, sprinkling her smart Paris frock profusely in the process. She returned radiant, and, though laughing, now talked in quite a cheerful tone of her hopes and plans for the Riviera.

Solemn church processions are organized to intercede for rain. The citizens, the mayor wearing his official scarf at the head, go to the outskirts of the town, accompanied by priests bearing sacred relics and icons. They make a complete circle of a field, chanting a *Te Deum*, then all kneel in prayer. At the estate of Prince Rouspoli at Vamesh (near Galatz) there is a fine brick column erected by the family in the middle of a field as a thank-offering for rain which seemed to come as a direct answer to prayer.

CHAPTER II

SEPTEMBER—DECEMBER 1909

FÊTE-DAYS—RUSALII—BLESSING THE HOME—CHURCH—CHRISTEN-
ING CUSTOMS—BIRTHDAYS—COURT BALL—CARMEN SYLVA—
FUNERAL CUSTOMS—ALL SAINTS' DAY—CHARITY—THE COOK
AND THE BALL-GOWN.

SEPTEMBER.

My courage in speaking Roumanian is growing every day. B. says I make about five mistakes in every four words I utter, but I will not be discouraged, because I find people know what I want. I suppose it is a proof of their quick intelligence.

The difference between Moldavian and Wallachian speech is about the same as between a Scottish and English accent; though some of the words for articles in common use are Russian words in a corrupted form in Moldavia and Turkish words similarly distorted in Wallachia. I noticed this in studying an old English-Roumanian dictionary, compiled by a Jassy professor. When proud of the additions to my vocabulary, I tried them on B., who demanded to see the book, indignantly casting it aside with the remark that evidently I was not discerning, and should only study books written by Wallachs. It is a remarkable fact that the Roumanian language has no dialects; a peasant from the most remote village of the Carpathians can be perfectly understood in Bucharest.

In the household everything is going on comfortably, except that there are about two fête-days a week, when

the servants must have a special food—no meat is one of the rules—and expect to do no work. Each of the festivals has some custom or tradition of its own, as our St. Valentine's Day, though, strange to say, he is unknown here. St. George's Day in May is one of the most popular. It is the custom to be weighed on that day. In the markets scales are put up for the occasion, and their owners are willing to guess your exact weight on a bet of a penny or so. Contracts for renting houses are dated from St. George's Day and outstanding debts are settled.

The peasants' belief in the *Rusalii*, to whom I hear frequent allusions, seems to be a confused survival of the myth of the three Fates and that of the woodland nymphs. They are three spirits or genii of the female species, capable of doing great harm to the crops if not placated by proper attention to their three-day festival in August.

OCTOBER.

This morning our priest came in imposing satin vestments to bless the house. It is the custom to make the round of the parish once a month. He was accompanied by an acolyte, who held the basin of holy water, called "*calderrushe*," for him, while he sprinkled the doorway with a small, round whisk, tied with a red ribbon.

I go to church occasionally on Sunday, but cannot make out a word of the prayers, as they are chanted with such a peculiar intonation. There are no seats—everyone stands, and there is a continuous coming and going and a good deal of chatting, too, though the majority follow the services reverently. Some pious old women kneel and kiss the floor in front of the sacred images; others of the congregation light tapers bought in the church porch. There is no organ, but the singing is wonderfully sweet and impressive.

The Greek Orthodox religion dominates in Roumania. Other Churches are almost non-existent. The priests, called "Popas," are frequently of peasant origin. They are allowed to marry and must have proverbially large families, as "Popesco" (i.e. Pope's son) as a family name is as common as "Smith" in America.

We were at a christening this week—a naval officer's infant son. I was glad they had a boy, as girls are received coldly in this part of the world! I have heard of a peasant who, on being asked how many children he had, replied "Four," though afterwards it was ascertained that he had seven—the negligible three being daughters!

A piece of gold is put by the father in the first bath in order to bring the child luck—the immediate luck being the midwife's, whose perquisite it is. At once the child is tightly wrapped in swaddling clothes and adorned with a knot of red ribbon to avert the evil eye.

The first-born son has his left ear pierced and wears a flat gold-button ear-ring, always with the hope that this will make him grow strong. It is supposed to be especially good for the eyesight. Baby girls have both ears pierced.

A few hours after her baby's birth the mother begins to receive congratulations. Every visitor brings a present for the new-born child, for it is considered the height of ill-breeding to neglect this social obligation. Within eight days the christening takes place, the mother never being present at the ceremony.

This little boy was called Mireea, a popular name. He roared lustily during the ceremony, poor baby, and no wonder, for the christening is by immersion in a very deep brass basin, which stands on the floor. The priests are deft at putting their fingers over the eyes, nose and mouth of the naked infant, as they dip it three times. Immediately afterwards the child is anointed with oil and given a spoonful of wine—the first Communion.

The cloth in which babies are wrapped after the immersion and until after the Communion is frequently a beautiful piece of embroidery or lace, the gift of the godmother, who has also provided an elaborate layette. Among the poorer people the honour of being godmother is frequently the cause of years of indebtedness, as she bears the entire expense. Each guest is presented with a medal or little cross, engraved with the child's name, as a souvenir of the occasion.

In the house, babies are carried about in a sort of cloth envelope; in the street, in brightly coloured satin cornucopias padded with wool. Peasant cradles are half of a tree-trunk whittled out with a knife; the cradle is used also as a baking-trough and washtub.

Even by the richer inhabitants of towns, baby-carriages are rarely used. Many times I have seen a servant-maid of fourteen or thereabouts staggering under the weight of a much-beribboned heavy child in the wake of an elegantly attired manuma. As in France, wet nurses are invariably employed by the well-to-do, and during the period of their service take their charges in their arms for an occasional airing.

The children receive presents and have parties on their saint's (name) day, instead of their birthday, and sometimes count their age also from that day. The name-days being easily remembered by daily reference to the calendar, all the circle of acquaintances comes to congratulate the child. In one afternoon this month I went to ten houses where there was an Ecaterina.

A cake with candles is a decided novelty, though occasionally in evidence. The old Roumanian custom is to seat the child on a flower-decked "doinitza" (i.e. a big wooden jar with lid and handle, used to draw water from the well), where the eldest of his relations present breaks a toothsome cake in two on his head—symbolic of the wish for all good things to befall him.

Later.

We have been for a week in Bucharest. The reason of our trip was an invitation to a Court Ball. I was as delighted as a child at the idea of being presented to the Queen, as I have always admired her. In fact, before meeting B., Carmen Sylva was the only person in Roumania of whom I had ever heard.

The palace has a disappointing exterior, not at all one's idea of the abode of kings, but the interior is dignified and handsome. There are some fine statues and pictures. I was especially interested in the beautifully wrought silver models of ships decorating a room panelled in dark oak. The ballroom had pale blue satin curtains and upholstery, the walls being cream—together a good neutral background for the lovely gowns and multi-coloured uniforms of the guests.

There are no formal drawing-rooms, as in England. At balls or afternoon receptions, newcomers are presented to the Sovereigns, who enter after the guests are assembled. An aisle is formed, men on one side, women on the other, down which they pass, then seat themselves on a small platform, while all salute them, bowing low.

When my turn came to be presented, I was escorted to the Queen by the chief Lady-in-Waiting. Her Majesty bade me welcome, speaking English delightfully, and set me quite at ease by asking a number of questions about America. She asked me especially, I remember, if Ontario were a "grey lake," for she had read a description of it from which she had gathered that impression. She wore a white lace gown with a very long train. On her head was an artistically fashioned coronet of pearls and diamonds, from which fell a lace mantilla, arranged in soft folds under the chin. About her neck were suspended several ropes of exquisite pearls, one of which reached below the waist. Like Queen Margheritta of Italy, Queen Elizabetha is a lover of pearls, and has



A GYPSY TINKER IN GALATZ.

1892
1893

a notable collection. She is about sixty, tall, with white hair and blue eyes, with the sweetest expression imaginable; goodness shines from her face.

King Carol is a small, slight man. He has a clear-cut profile, fresh colour, and such clear blue eyes, that are at once keen and kind. Princess Marie is truly "a daughter of the gods—divinely tall and most divinely fair." She has great charm. I danced in the cotillion, which is an invariable feature of balls here. Altogether a memorable evening!

NOVEMBER.

The weather is warm and bright still—more like September than the month of "Falling leaf and fading tree, and meadows brown and sere." As time goes on, I feel I am gaining more insight into the mentality of the people and their mode of life. It seems snobbish to talk of "classes" in democratic America, but here the divisions are sharply drawn, the more so as what would be the "middle class" in England or the "petite bourgeoisie" in France is mostly composed of foreigners—Jews, Armenians, Greeks or Germans. The Roumanians seem to have little taste, or indeed faculty, for commercial enterprises: the peasants till the land, the proprietors live as gentlemen of leisure, frequently abroad. The professional men are often sons of small proprietors, carrying on a long family tradition in law, medicine or the army.

Even the funerals are in three classes. Until twenty years ago the coffins were carried through the streets uncovered. Now this is no longer permitted, except when the Metropolitan dies. He is borne to his last resting-place seated upright on a chair, which is supported on the shoulders of several priests, clothed in his ceremonial robes, his golden cope flashing with splendid jewels.

A first-class funeral with military music goes down the main street of the town with pomp and circumstance ; a second-class funeral is much simpler—and silent. I never witnessed one of the third class, but know what chagrin any family would suffer were its resources so limited as to be obliged to bury the dead so meanly.

One hears solemn music approaching, and on looking into the street sees the slow procession moving by. First the band, then two men in long silver-braided double-breasted coats, with cocked hats *à la Napoléon*, each carrying a big lantern on the end of a six-foot pole ; pinned to their shoulders are enormous white handkerchiefs (*basma*), one of their perquisites for officiating. Then follow two others, bearing between them a large wooden tray with straight, projecting handles. The tray is heaped up with “*covrigi*”—big round biscuits with a large hole in the middle. This is the “*pomana*,” or charity-offering, which will be distributed to the poor, already clustering about the gate of the family, awaiting their return from the cemetery.

If the dead man has been decorated during his lifetime the medals are carried by friends or members of the family, fastened on velvet cushions, immediately preceding the hearse. The four horses are draped with black nets reaching to the ground, and have high nodding plumes attached to their heads. The ornate funeral car is nearly always completely covered with wreaths of artificial flowers and palms eight or ten feet in circumference, attached by wide purple or white ribbons, on which are printed in gilt letters such inscriptions as : “From the inconsolable widow,” “From the sorrowing children,” “To our Uncle—Eternal Remembrance.”

Then follow the priests on foot, clad in brocaded satin robes of vivid colour, wearing purple velvet, muff-like hats, which contrast strangely with the long fluttering mourning veils enveloping the women relatives of the

deceased walking by their sides. Professional female mourners, whose duty it is to beat their breasts and cry aloud in noisy grief, are still employed in the country, but I have never come into contact with them in towns.

Funeral feasts, with special dishes, are partaken of, and there are many curious, minute details in connection with the departed, such as putting a piece of money in their hands (their fare over the Styx) and giving alms in memory of them at stated intervals for a year. On All Saints' Day, families spend the day in the cemeteries, taking their midday repast, which consists of symbolic dishes, around the graves of their dear ones. Of these dishes, the most remarkable is the "coliva," which was known as long ago as when the Romans conquered Dacia. It consists of parboiled wheat and nuts, sweetened with honey. A share of the feast is deposited on each grave, which is afterwards distributed to the needy of the parish by the priests, who go from one family to another, all joining in prayers in which each ancestor is remembered by name; sometimes half an hour is necessary for the recital. The priest is offered wine by each family group, and he invariably pours a few drops on the grave before touching it with his lips. When treats of wine or *tzwiea* are offered to peasants, they always spill a little on the ground with ostentatious politeness, while wishing one long life, before tossing the entire glassful down their throats in one gulp.

Though organized charities are in their infancy, I have seldom known more individual goodness and helpfulness towards the poor and suffering than in Roumania. There is a Lady Bountiful in every street. The attitude of the rich to the poor smacks of feudalism to a certain extent, but that is inevitable in the present state of development; the chasm between the classes can only be bridged by advancement in education. Every Saturday beggars congregate about the door of a chosen bene-

factor, sure of a gift of money, food or fuel proportioned to their needs and the fortune of the giver. Individuals will care for a family of poor near their gates for a lifetime, making layettes for the babies, soup for the sick, educating and frequently adopting one of the children, and helping to bury the dead with the grandeur so dear to the Roumanian heart. A splendid interment is the hope, dream, ambition of them all. A poor funeral is always referred to with wistful regret and sadness.

Yesterday I condemned an old ball-gown of pale green silk. Just as I prepared to cut it up, the cook, a middle-aged woman, came into my room. She saw the fatal scissors and realized that "*Sic transit gloria!*" She gasped, her voice trembling with emotion:

"Cucunitza (little mistress), for the love of the Lord don't cut! Give me the dress—I will bless you always for it."

"What will you do with it?"

"Can you ask? I will keep it for my burial garment." And, kissing my hand with fervour, she departed with her treasure pressed tightly to her bosom, promising to remember me in her prayers!

CHAPTER III

JANUARY-APRIL 1910

DIFFERENCE IN CALENDAR ; CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S TRADITIONS
—CALLING-CARDS—BLESSING OF THE WATERS—"BABELE"—
WITCHES—SACRIFICES—EASTER—SUPPER ON BOARD.

JANUARY 1910.

At this time of the year, the difference between the "old style" (Julian) and "new style" (Gregorian) is more than ever confusing. In spite of having a double calendar, I am constantly uncertain as to whether it is the first or the thirteenth of the month. There are advantages, however, in that we have a whole month of festivities. We celebrated Christmas new style with an English family—the toast of "Absent friends" made everyone silent for a long moment, though otherwise the evening was very jolly, the few Roumanians present being enchanted with the idea, new to them, of kissing under the mistletoe, and they went at it with enthusiastic ardour! Then came New Year's new style, but one couldn't really get up any sentiment over the New Year coming in without bells ringing and general rejoicing.

Christmas old style was ushered in with elaborate preparations. The ancient custom of singing Christmas carols is kept up, and very beautiful it was on Christmas Eve to hear choirs of schoolboys with well-trained voices singing the traditional hymns before one's door after dark. Uncle Christmas (Mosh Craichun) comes down the chimney just as he does in America, to fill the shoes

of good children with toys. The naughty ones find theirs full of cornmeal, with a bundle of switches on top!

On Christmas morning we had frequent visits from ragged urchins with "Stars of Bethlehem." The "star" is a light wooden frame, more resembling a wheel than its namesake; it is mounted on a long stick, covered with bright paper tinsel, and adorned with little bells. The ragamuffins sing a doggerel song, wishing one long life and hoping the year may flower as a rose-tree and be as sweet as an apple; then they tinkle their bells persistently until bribed to take themselves off.

New Year is a very festive occasion, too. If the first caller is fair-complexioned, all will be well. I remarked the reluctance of anyone to go out of the gate on New Year's morning before first scanning the street carefully in every direction. On inquiry, it was revealed to me that it would be disastrous to meet a priest on first going out—an encounter with one of the reverend gentlemen would be a calamity! On other days of the year, if anything untoward happens in the house, such as breaking a vase or window, I am sure to hear some one remark resignedly, "It was certain—I met a priest this morning!"

On New Year's morning there is a special service in the cathedral, which all the dignitaries attend in full ceremonial uniforms, and the effect is striking, especially when Russian and Hungarian officials are present.

There is no plum-pudding known, but the New Year's cake is a substitute. It is an apple-tart, the paste of which has been rolled to gossamer thinness and arranged in numerous layers. Scattered through this crust are tiny rolls of paper, with rhymes written on them, containing prognostics for the year. At house parties these are frequently composed by the guests and cause endless merriment. The Greeks put off fireworks at the New Year, and this is practised in Galatz, where there is an important Greek colony. It is rather startling to hear the little



PEASANT GIRL GOING TO THE WELL.

crackers exploding all day long, when one does not expect it.

Veritable avalanches of calling-cards inscribed with good wishes are exchanged by mail—the stamps used as seals on the back of the envelope instead of on the corner in front, as elsewhere in Europe. The telegraph messengers are kept busy distributing pink telegram forms, printed in advance with “*La Multiani*” (A Happy New Year), the name of the sender and address of the destination only being sent by wire. Even next-door neighbours exchange telegrams. Each messenger sends in the telegram with his own calling-card, every one of which has the bearer’s function as well as his name inscribed. For example: “Hannibal Clothes-Peg (Annibal Carlig), Messenger to the Royal Roumanian State Telegraph Service.” I was very much impressed by the politeness of the messengers at first, but was somewhat wearied when Hannibal sent in his card for the sixth time on New Year’s Day, in addition to those of a small army of his fellow-messengers, all lining up at the door for the inevitable “*baesheeshi*.” A few days before the New Year it is almost impossible to get small change, as everyone is preparing to “thank” the bringers of good wishes.

St. John the Baptist’s Day is the 6th of January, and the date of a picturesque ceremony called “*Boboteaza*” (Blessing of the Waters). The Archbishop, escorted by priests and choirboys, went through the streets to the shore of the Danube. There he threw a large wooden cross into the water, stretching out his hands in blessing. Immediately several men (designated in advance) threw themselves into the icy water and fought for the possession of the cross. It is rarely lost; in fact, I have been told the same one has been used for twenty-five years. As a reward, the lucky possessor is allowed to keep the cross for a day. He carries it about from house to house, eagerly invited to enter each one; even the poorest give

him some pennies, so he makes a considerable sum, which it is to be hoped rewards him for his freezing bath.

MARCH.

I can hardly believe I have been here almost a year. Next month B. is to take command of one of the monitors and will be away for most of the summer, so I am planning to go home. What a joyful meeting it will be! The strongest impression left by this kaleidoscopic year is the spontaneous, delightful hospitality prevailing everywhere, and the natural courtesy and politeness of all with whom I have come in contact. Never a day has passed without some tactful, graceful attention being shown me. Still, home is home, after all!

The first ten days of this month are called "Babele." Before the first of March every one decides on a date—the women odd, the men even numbers. When the date chosen arrives, one's luck for the coming year will be determined by the kind of weather prevailing. Husbands and fathers present the women of their household with *martisoare* (little Marches). These are medals or coins of various designs, which are tied to the wrist with a red and white cord, and so worn till the *babas* are over. This is supposed to keep the skin from being burnt black and ugly by the fierce rays of the spring sun. My first charm is a dainty enamel daisy. Four-leaf clovers, pigs, mushrooms, horseshoes and number 13 are other favourites.

Apropos of the *babas*, the mass of the peasants are profound believers in magic. A *baba* (old woman or witch) can cure them of all ills. Our Mihai was very feverish one day lately, but refused to take any medicine or see a doctor. On my threatening to send him to the hospital, he begged an hour's respite. I afterwards learned he went to a *baba*; the next day he was quite well. Crafty questioning elicited the fact that she had put a cow's skull with the horns on the floor, sprinkled it with blood, said several

incantations, then anointed the patient with a salve. She had given him something to drink, also—undoubtedly it was a concoction of herbs which allayed the fever and cured him.

The town is being freshened up for the summer—white-wash and paint are everywhere. Quite a number of new buildings are being erected, and as B. is intensely interested in houses and construction, we poke about on our walks. I notice that when the first rafter is put on a roof a branch of a tree is attached to it—usually a willow bough, the object being to propitiate supposedly unfavourable influences.

The beautiful church at Curtea d'Argesh is a striking example of the belief prevalent in the Middle Ages that a sacrifice was necessary to assure the successful completion of a building. The architect, Maestru Manolé, was ambitious to build a monument of imperishable fame. Three times the central dome fell. Then, during his temporary absence, the superstitious workmen seized his young wife and walled her, living, in the foundation. The work was brought to triumphant conclusion, but the cries of the imprisoned victim were ever ringing in the ears of the master-builder. He went mad and leapt from the summit of his masterpiece to death and forgetfulness!

APRIL.

Easter¹ again, and just such lovely weather as on the day of my arrival in this "Land of love and longing." I have been very much impressed by the ceremonies of this, the greatest festival of the year. On the Saturday night preceding Easter Sunday the citizens gather in the cathedral or near it at eleven o'clock. All is darkness within, except for the vacillating flames from silver lamps

¹ The Easter customs differ slightly in different districts. The detail of the dialogue at the church door described was witnessed at Baleni (Covurlui), the estate of Prince Léon Cantacuzene.

hung before the sacred pictures. After a short religious ceremony, the Archbishop, impressive in gorgeous vestments, leaves the church, followed by a torch-lit procession of chanting priests and singing choirboys, and makes a complete circuit of the building. When he is again in front of it, it is midnight; the door has been closed. Solemnly approaching, he knocks upon it three times with his pastoral staff. A voice within cries:

"Who is there?"

"'Tis I, the Great Emperor whom all await."

"How shall we know that you are indeed the Great Emperor whom all await?"

"By the sign of the Cross you shall know me."

He is then admitted. He goes slowly to the back of the church, passing through the central doorway of the altar screen, open only on this festival, and lighting a tall candle from the lamp burning on the holy table, he faces the congregation, saying:

"Brethren, take your light from mine."

All have come provided with candles; gradually the church is filled with tiny points of light, which spread over the square outside as the congregation disperses. Carefully guarding the flame, each returns home to light a lamp before the icon of the house, where it is tended with pious care. In Bessarabia, these sacred flames are guarded on the homeward journey in brilliantly coloured Chinese lanterns, which gives the weirdly beautiful effect of the fluttering of a flock of gigantic butterflies. Then a three-day fast is broken with joyful feasting—friends embrace, telling each other, like the first Christians: "Christ is risen!" "It is true that He has risen!" is the reply. This form of greeting is used during forty days following, instead of the usual "Bună-ziua" (Good-day).

After the ceremony in church we went on board the monitor, the *Lascar Catargiu*, of which B. is now the commander, accompanied by a party of friends, to

celebrate with the crew. On stepping on board we were greeted by a joyful shout that made a thousand echoes ring out over the dark waves: "Christ is risen!" Then we visited the men's quarters, where a bounteous supper had been prepared. Going up and down the long aisles between the narrow tables, we picked red eggs from the heaped-up dishes and "chock-chocked" (struck) the eggs together with each sailor in turn. Great interest was shown as to the outcome, for the one whose egg cracked the other's without breaking itself was destined to be the strongest (the master) during the coming year. I noticed quite particularly on this occasion the natural courtesy, fine features and amiable expressions of the sailors, recruited entirely from the peasant class. After supper they sang in chorus with much apparent enjoyment. They were stirring martial songs that night, but I prefer the plaintive, haunting airs of the "doinas" (folk songs), which are so characteristic an expression of the mentality of the people.

CHAPTER IV

JUNE 1910

AN EXCURSION ON THE PRUTH—DRIVE THROUGH VILLAGES—
DANUBIAN GEESE—DESCRIPTION OF THE RIVER—INSPECTION
OF FRONTIER POSTS—CAHUL—PEASANT'S HOUSE—DEPARTURE
FOR AMERICA.

JUNE 1910.

CAPTAIN V., who is inspector of the frontier guardsmen, proposed in an unthinking moment that we should accompany him on his next inspection of the Bessarabian border. He was unaware then of my *penchant* for excursions, but he knows all about it now! As his gun-boat has very limited accommodation and only "aristocratic" cutlery and dishes for one, we were obliged to pack a basket-trunk with dishes, table-linen and silver for the trip. Olga D. was persuaded to accompany us, in spite of the protestations of her family, who were horrified at this unconventional junketing. There was some difficulty in settling on the day of departure. Tuesday is taboo in Roumania for starting on a journey, and had to be carefully avoided.

Half an hour in the train brought us to a wayside station, where we found two carriages ready to drive us to Oanca. It was there that the boat was awaiting our arrival. The precious basket-trunk and a brass bound box, containing the money to pay the wages of the frontier guardsmen, were carefully stowed away, and we set off in high good-humour.

The drive of two hours took us by a meandering road through a level country and past several villages. The sun was setting and bands of peasants were returning home from the fields. The hamlets seemed to fade into the vast sweep of the brown earth. Square mud-houses, mere hovels with thatched roofs, appeared to have spontaneously sprung from the soil where they stood. On some of the roofs storks had built their nests and were standing solemnly beside them. In the yards pigs, chickens and children were mixed indiscriminately together. Flocks of geese wandered along the roadside, some of them huge birds, their brownish feathers curled untidily wrong-side foremost. Captain V. pointed them out to me; they were the first Danubian geese I had seen, and peculiar to this region.

Piles of dried corn-stalks higher than the little cabins were the outstanding feature of each village—the only fuel. Not a tree was to be seen—not a hill—not a fence; the tilled fields extended to the far horizon.

The peasants saluted politely in passing, turning their creaking wagons, drawn by slow, tired oxen, to the side of the road to let us pass. I remarked to Captain V. that I had not yet seen a fat peasant. "I've been in their neighbourhood all my life and I never have seen one," he replied, and added it was not surprising when one knows the hard work and scant fare to which they are accustomed. Cornmeal porridge (*mamaliga*), with a slice of onion or red pepper as a relish, a piece of goat's milk cheese—that is their daily fare. Meat is only eaten on great festivals, such as Christmas and Easter. Many of the girls were strikingly beautiful, their slim, straight silhouettes most pleasing. All the women were bare-footed; the men for the most part wore woollen socks and leather sandals.

When we came to Oanea, night had fallen and the gleaming lamplight from the Government boat was a

welcome beacon. We unpacked our trunk with the help of the sailors, and after an excellent supper made up the two long, cushioned seats in the cabin into narrow but cozy beds for Olga and me, while the men made themselves comfortable in the barracks a stone's-throw away. Next morning we were interested spectators of the inspection of the post. Everything was spick and span, and then we installed ourselves under the awning on the deck and gave ourselves up to lazy enjoyment of the sail.

The Pruth is narrow, with low, shelving banks. Its brown stream, though very shallow in the summer, is the highway for the surrounding country, on which the farmers float their wheat and corn in barges to the Danube when the water is at its highest in the spring and fall. It was amusing, as we went along, to see the storks on the shore—lords of all they surveyed. Then they heard the "chug" of the engine and loftily decided to move on. Hardly had they settled in a new spot than again the annoying noise would approach. After a dozen or so short stages, they generally gave it up and resigned themselves to a long flight elsewhere. There were thousands of sandpipers, whose tranquil lives we disturbed also, as well as kingfishers and swallows. Bird-life is very abundant and varied.

On the Russian bank sentries were keeping watch in pairs with gun on shoulder. On our side, when the sentry saw us coming he would stand at attention and salute. On nearing the post-house a look-out would see the boat approaching and run quickly to warn those in the house, so that the Captain found them drawn up in military array before the door, all washed and brushed, with every button shining. We would stop and tie up, and he would carefully go over the details with the sergeant or whoever was in charge, even lifting the cover off the soup boiling on the stove; some of the contents of the brass-bound



COTTAGE NEAR THE FORTH RIVER.

box were distributed at each stop. This took half an hour or so, and then we moved on to the next post.

In the afternoon we drew up to the Russian bank, where there was a little customs house. Here our passports were carefully examined in the august presence of two brightly coloured lithographs of the Czar and his consort. This ceremony over, we climbed into a high cart and drove to Cahul, a village about four miles distant. The country is marshy here, and the road is elevated several feet and solidly built to avoid the danger of floods. Cahul is an untidy huddle of houses straggling along dusty cross-roads. The population seemed mostly Roumanian, the few Russians forming a decided contrast to them, with their blue eyes and blond hair. They were much bigger, and taller, also.

The second day of our picnic it rained, but towards evening the sun gleamed out, and each putting on a pair of soldiers' top-boots, we went out for a stroll in one of the villages. It seemed more prosperous than any of the others we had seen, nearly all the houses being whitewashed; some, from the base up to a quarter of the wall, were painted a vivid blue. The tiny windows, with four panes immovably fixed in the frame, were outlined in red or blue, which gave a cheerful aspect to the little dwellings. Most of the houses had tin roofs here; all a narrow verandah across the front, from rafters of which hang wreaths of red peppers or strings of dry corneobs. Some had pretty entrance gates, with rude carvings on the panels and thatched sloping roofs above them, like lich-gates in England. In the roughly paved courtyards were wells neatly coped with stone and surmounted by wheel and chain, to which a stout bucket was attached. I have never seen a modern pump in Roumania. In the country, water is drawn from the wells by a primitive lever consisting of a slender perch twelve to twenty feet long, like an attenuated finger,

which is supported obliquely on a forked stick and weighted with a boulder at the short end—a length of rope and iron hook terminating the long end. It is at the “fontana” that lovers meet—the scene of their songs and courting-days. They implore the “little green leaf” of the tree overhead to witness vows of eternal fidelity made at the well.

At one door on our route a smiling young woman was standing, her distaff held in one hand, while with the other she twisted the wool and set the spindle revolving with dexterous rapidity. She looked so frank and well-disposed that B. stopped and, after greeting her, explained I was a stranger and would like to see the interior of her home. She consented readily and we went in. At the right of the entrance was another door, which opened into a narrow passage used as a store-room. On stepping into the main room we saw a terra-cotta stone blocking one corner, while in the opposite corner an icon with a red lamp burning before it attracted our attention. It was fixed breast-high; underneath was fastened an embroidered towel, knotted in the middle. Nailed to the wall, about three feet from the floor, was a long, wide shelf; this was the bed, on which were piled seven or eight square pillows of various sizes, encased in neat white slips. The bed-cover was a red satin quilt, to which a sheet was buttoned, overlapping the edges a few inches all round. It seems the sleeper rolls himself in this quilt as in a sleeping-bag, there being no springs, consequently no way of tucking in the covers. Along the wall beside the bed a strip of woollen embroidery, stitched in bright colours, was stretched horizontally, and on the floor at right angles with the head of it stood a flat-topped wooden chest, painted dark green and decorated with a crude flower pattern in reds and yellows.

The only other room in the house was the kitchen.

Here was the family hearth (camin), the centre of the home-life. It was composed of flat stones, neatly embedded in fire-hardened earth and raised a few inches above the level of the floor. A fire was burning, the smoke being carried off under a deep, wide hood, which overhung the fire-place and took up an entire wall of the apartment—a cheery and comfortable arrangement, I found it. A couple of stools and a small, plain table were the only furnishings, except a few earthen “strakin-as,” or soup-plates, in which the mamaliga is eaten, some china mugs and a covered wooden water-pail, pierced with slots near the top—it had no handle. A painted rack hung on the wall, holding a number of wooden spoons, suspended by notches carved in the end of their handles—a fascinating novelty to me, and I promptly resolved to have one at home. On the table I noticed a baking-trough, covered with a towel. Our hostess drew back the cover and revealed a baby, a few weeks old, with its big, brown eyes wide open! I picked it up—it was like a board to touch, so tightly was it encased in swaddling-bands. I begged the mother to unwrap them; she hesitated, but finally undid the upper band, leaving the hands and arms free. The baby cooed with delight, but the anxious mother quickly bound it up again, before accompanying us to the door.

On our way back we inspected the village churches set in their quiet orchards and the bakery, where the villagers were assembled, waiting for their evening loaves. The most delicious crusty smell pervaded the neighbourhood, and the blazing, wavering light of the baker's fire as he stoked his ovens threw fantastic Rembrandtesque shadows over the crowd standing before his open-fronted shop.

So! I have touched Russia with my little finger—I wonder if I shall ever penetrate farther. It attracts and repels me at the same time.

Later.

The *Lascar Catargiu* is sailing next week and will be absent all the summer, Our arrangements are completed, and I am leaving via Berlin for London next week, *en route* for Canada.

CHAPTER V

DECEMBER 1910

RETURN TO GALATZ—A WEEK'S DIARY—RUSSIAN COACHMEN—"DOTS"
—VISIT TO SFINTA VINERI—THE BATH HOUSE—ROUMANIAN
FOOD.

GALATZ, THURSDAY, JOI (JOVE'S DAY).

YESTERDAY, Alexandre, Olga's brother, asked me if I would care to accompany Olga and himself this morning for a drive in the country with the object of assisting at a local ceremony which he thought might interest me. That was enough to induce me to rise before six, to the consternation of the entire household and the amazement of B., who had confidently predicted that my enthusiasm would evaporate overnight.

My companions were on time to the second, driving dashingly up to the gate in one of the smart turn-outs one can hardly believe could be for hire. The high-bred horses are groomed to perfection, their long tails and flowing manes most picturesque, their harness and appointments beautifully finished. The open, finely upholstered victorias are worthy of the steeds, and the Russian coachmen among the most striking figures in Galatz. They are clad in blue velvet, full-skirted mantles falling to the ankle, a pink or sky-blue satin sash, with the ends floating out at the back, girt about their ample waists. The coats, especially on gala occasions, are fastened by double rows of silver buttons, running diagonally from the shoulder to the waist in

front. Their straw-coloured hair has a Dutch cut, giving their broad, fresh-coloured faces an absurdly childish look, in spite of wrinkles. On their heads they wear peaked caps. All these coachmen are members of a small religious sect—the Shopki. Expelled from Russia on account of their strange beliefs and practices, they have settled here and in Bucharest, and engage exclusively in the business of horse-breeding and selling and driving. They seem kindly, gentle people, taking a proprietary interest in their regular patrons, with whom they are amusingly familiar at times, though without the slightest thought of impertinence. Many wealthy citizens find it more convenient to rent these elegant carriages by the month than to keep conveyances of their own. Alexandre is beloved of the birjars (drivers), as he never walks where he can drive and is most liberal with tips.

With conscious pride at being ready on time, I joined him and Olga, and off we sped, the bells attached to the horses' collars tinkling merrily.

Our destination was a village half an hour's drive from town, on the estate of Madame G., a wealthy Greek widow, advanced in years. Every year ten virtuous maidens are selected by the priest from those living on her property, and in the event of their marriage Madame G. presents each with a cow, a pair of oxen, a cart and a small sum of money. Naturally the girls are much sought after by the swains of the neighbourhood, and never a year passes without the ten "dots" being given. Alexandre is Madame G.'s deputy on these occasions, and enjoys the privilege of kissing the bride, if he is so disposed!

When we arrived at the diminutive town-hall, we found the mayor in neat peasant's dress waiting to receive us at the door, the young couple standing shyly in the background. The cream-coloured oxen, yoked

to the cart, were in the yard, and the cow attached by a halter to a near-by tree. We proceeded to the main room of the building, the walls of which were adorned by lurid charts showing the evil effects of drunkenness. The marriage had already taken place, and the ceremony we witnessed was the signing of the deed of gift. Neither the rosy-cheeked bride nor her husband could write, so made large crosses on the document. Alexandre made a little speech to the bridegroom, who stood rather sheepishly listening to the exhortation to treat his wife kindly and to care for the newly acquired animals. After our congratulations, we trooped out to see them starting for their new home. The man picked up a heavy whip he had left leaning against the door, and mounting on the cart, he drove off, his wife sitting humbly on the floor of it, leading the cow by the halter.

A stroll through a grassy park by a willow-bordered stream brought us to the family mausoleum—a small stone structure with a chapel at the entrance, all enclosed by a wrought-iron fence. It is quite a common thing for families to bury their dead on their country estates. Not long ago the proprietor of a lovely place showed me, as quite the greatest attraction of his park, the burial vault he had caused to be excavated in a hill-side, and where his stone coffin was prepared beside those of the deceased members of his family. The long inscription of his titles, degrees and meritorious work was already chiselled and gilded on a marble tablet—the only line left blank being the date of his death.

FRIDAY, VINERI (VENUS'S DAY).

In Galatz there is a well-known church called "Sfinta Vineri" (Saint Venus), of which the principal attraction is an icon differing from the majority of holy pictures in that it is not covered with metals, but is simply a

good-sized painting, so dark and smoky that one cannot distinguish its subject, although the vague outlines suggest a head and bust of a man with a hood.

This picture is famous as a wonder-worker. If one has a great wish, or is in uncertainty as to the outcome of a venture, one goes to the church and presses a five-bani piece against the picture. (A five-bani piece is made of nickel and has a hole in the middle, and is equal to one cent.) If it sticks a minute before falling into the money-box below, the wish will be granted or the venture be successful. First it is usual to take the precaution of lighting a candle or two, or vowing an offering in case of success. Sceptical people say the priests find it expedient to put a coating of wax over the picture from time to time in order to preserve it.

While in uncertainty as to whether or not I could return to America last June, Ninitza B. suggested our going to Sfinta Vineri and consulting the icon. No sooner said than done. Her coin and mine both stuck firmly before rattling into the receptacle. We were much gratified, and I was curious to know what she had wished. She confided to me that for a long time she had been in love with an army officer, but they could not marry because he was poor and her parents were not well enough off to give her the "dot" which the law demands in such cases. She had wished that something would occur to enable her to marry the choice of her heart. The following week my departure was arranged. Now I find Ninitza married. Greatly interested in the outcome of our excursion to Sfinta Vineri, I demanded the details of her marriage. Shortly after I left a wealthy though distant relative of her family had given her the necessary "dot" after meeting her fiancé, who he thought would make her a worthy husband. She told me that she had been waiting for my return, so we could go together to make

a thank-offering. We have just come from the church, where she gave a lovely old brooch—an heirloom. I noticed at this second visit that there were numbers of votive offerings suspended on a chain near the picture, most of them gold or silver hearts. I have heard of cases where, in order to avenge an injury, candles have been burnt and offerings promised if Sfinta Vineri or another saint would punish the offender.

SAMBATA (SATURDAY).

To-day is bath-day, and no one can mistake it! The bath-house (or rather one of them, for they are numerous) is not far from Strada Carol. Processions of schoolboys are passing all day (the priests' school being the longest of them) in that direction, each boy carrying his clean linen in a bundle. Our soldiers go also and meet their fellow-orderlies there, and all return with shining, rosy faces. They are vapour-baths, and of several grades—the really “classy” bath costing forty cents. As a rule, Roumanians do not consider bathing in water as really cleansing; even those who have modern zinc bath-tubs in their houses go regularly once a week to the vapour-baths. B., travelled though he is, tells me he never has the sensation of thorough cleanliness except after the Turkish bath to which he was accustomed since childhood.

In many households the bath-house is a separate building, with a special stove and cauldron to heat the water, which, when boiling, fills the room with steam and is only used once a week. Our Viennese bath, enamelled white, with a gas-heated boiler and shower attached, is the first of its kind our friends had seen, and when calling with other acquaintances they frequently ask permission to show the newcomers the bathroom. On St. George's Day I was much amused to see that the moving vans of house-

hold goods were topped invariably by a bath-tub. The bath is considered as furniture, not as a fixture, and every householder must provide his own.

When I was a *débutante* and first went to luncheon parties, I used to regret that caviare was a smart thing to offer one's guests, for I thought it like eating a mouthful of salt. Never would I have known how delicious caviare can be on its native heath, had I not come to these shores.

There are various kinds, and all are delicious. There is the fresh caviare (*ieri moi*)—luscious, pale-grey pearls served ice-cold with lemon; there is the “*presata*,” slightly salted, which one spreads on bread like butter; there is “*tescuita*,” slightly different again; then there is “*ieri de stuka*,” which is red and eaten beaten to a cream with olive oil and drops of lemon juice—and all these ambrosias can be obtained at quite reasonable prices every day in the year.

Another dish I like is a highly seasoned hash, wrapped up in vine leaves, boiled, strained and served with “*smuntans*,” which is a sort of sour cream. Other meat dishes prepared with olive oil do not tempt me, as they look greasy, though I try to persuade myself that they are more digestible than if done with lard. Butter is an expensive luxury, and very little used, cheese, of which there are many kinds, taking its place.

Italian cooking is popular—risottos, macaroni and similar *plats* being the chief stock-in-trade of the less skilful cooks. We have fish in great variety, both sea and fresh water, though the only native shellfish we get are crayfish. Lobsters and oysters come from Dieppe, and can only be had in Bucharest restaurants.

People here seem inordinately fond of meat dishes,

two being served usually at each meal, while puddings and pies are unknown, the dessert consisting of fruit and nuts. The cakes served at the four o'clock "gouter," which corresponds with our afternoon tea, are very mushy, being filled with creams, and must be eaten with little silver shovels the size of spoons. The prevailing flavour in all cakes and sweets is rum. Rum is put in the tea also, with a slice of lemon—no one takes cream or milk—and the result is agreeable, but is not the least like our notion of tea. For that matter, the China tea is used, and my Ceylon brew always rouses comment.

CHAPTER VI

JULY-AUGUST 1911

VULCANI—HOTEL—BATHS—SAD FATE OF BUTTER—PICNICS—PUCIO-
ASA—TERRIBLE COMBAT—A COUNTRY FAIR—SPORTS.

VULCANI, JULY 1911.

WE came here so that B. can take the baths, which are excellent for rheumatism. A brother-officer, who was at Vulcani last year, told B. that as it was quiet and unfashionable we would easily find a good place to stay; in fact, he made some vague reference to a hotel. Trustingly, we packed our modest baggage and set forth. On arriving, the station pleased me greatly—the train stopped under an archway formed by tall trees planted close to the rails on either side. A couple of carriages were waiting; we engaged them both, piling our luggage in one and ourselves mounting in the other.

The village is a mile or so from the station. The road crossed a broad, shallow stream—no bridge at all—which we forded without any hesitation on the horses' part—evidently the daily routine. The driver told us the village was crowded with visitors. When we mentioned the hotel, he looked surprised; he said he had never heard of one in Vulcani. "Perhaps you know of some new house?" Commander C. had mentioned that the "hotel" was a recent addition to the town. "No," he hadn't, but good-naturedly promised to drive us about until we found shelter. A shower coming on, we had



FISH VENDOR IN GALATZ.

to put up the hood, and could see nothing of the scenery—just our Jehu's broad back. We stopped at various houses, but all were full up. Our driver asked everyone if they had heard of the hotel; finally one woman exclaimed: "That must be Jonesco's new house on the hill outside the village!" We resolved to find the elusive hotel, even if we had to drive to the next town! At length, by bending our heads to the level of our ankles to see below the hood, we espied a long bungalow on a hill-side. The boards were new and guiltless of paint. "There's Jonesco's," said our guide. We saw a man moving about near the house, and B. decided to approach him and inquire if we could stay there. What was my surprise when from the distance I saw them cordially greeting each other, like long-lost friends, as indeed they were; for it was no other than Colonel Poetash,¹ who had been a fellow-pupil of B.'s at the Military School, and who was staying for a month at Vulcani for the baths.

The bungalow belongs in truth to a certain Jonesco from another town, who built it to rent the rooms, of which there were six, to summer visitors. Luckily one was free, and we promptly took possession of it, as the key was hung on a nail at the door. Each room has an entrance from the verandah, and back of it a large bathroom, of which a huge wooden tub is the sole and only furniture. We found the apartment perfectly clean; it had never been occupied before. Two wooden beds, solidly nailed to the floor, are against two opposite walls; a washstand, a table, two chairs—that is all!

¹ Colonel, afterwards General, Poetash played an heroic part in the battle of Maraseshti. After the Armistice (January 1918) he was sent to Bessarabia to quell Bolshevik uprisings. While dining in a little restaurant in a friendly village he was shot in the back by an enemy assassin. His soldiers found the murderer and literally tore him to pieces, limb by limb. A statue has been erected to his memory in Hotin (Bessarabia) by subscriptions from the entire army.

Quite a hotel ! Colonel Poetash was sure we would find nothing better ; and as we were delighted at the prospect of being near him, we decided to have our luggage brought up the hill. The Colonel and his wife had brought cooking utensils and servants with them, and had arranged an open-air dining-room on their end of the verandah, so dined at home. Fortunately a cross-roads inn was near, where we got something to eat under the shelter of a wide pergola. Much amused with the unexpected primitiveness of our *villeggiatura*, we went in search of shops, under the shelter of our biggest umbrella, and invested in a basin, pitcher, soap-dish and candles for our room. Bedclothes and towels were in our steamer trunks. As my precious tea-basket contained a spirit lamp and kettle, by five o'clock we were able to invite our new-found friends to a cup of tea at our end of the verandah.

The Colonel is a man of gigantic physique ; in fact, I have never seen anyone of such formidable proportions. He reminds me of a mighty oak, and his jolly laugh fairly makes the walls shake. To balance things, his sweet-faced wife is quite of fairy-like stature.

Presently our landlord came, and we arranged with him to engage the apartment by the week, at a very reasonable price. One of the questions to be settled was *à propos* of the lamp fixed on a pole in front of the house, to which we agreed to contribute five cents a week for oil, so it could be lighted every night.

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This morning, at the all too early hour of six, we were wakened by a creaking and squeaking of heavy axles, the trampling of oxen and shrill cries of "Hais ! Hais !" It was the arrival of the mineral water for the bath. There, on a primitive wagon, were two large barrels, from which a boy was dipping the water in a bucket, while

another youth, a pailful in hand, mounted the three steps leading to the bathroom, and poured it into the tub with a mighty splash, continuing his journeys until it was full. Then again crying "Hais!" (to the left) to the patient beasts, they lumbered heavily to the next door and repeated the performance until all six baths were full.

In the meantime, a large bonfire, built on a rocky ledge back of the house, was heating stones of various sizes. When they were sufficiently heated, a boy seized one of them with a pair of long tongs, and rushing into the first bathroom at hand, dropped it into the tub full of water with a mighty hissing and splashing. Several other stones followed in rapid succession until the water was nearly at boiling-point, when they were withdrawn, with the announcement, "Bath is ready, Excellency!" A half-hour's sojourn daily in this queer-looking and smelling water is the "cure." This afternoon the boys came back and scooped the water out of the tub and made the bathroom tidy for the morrow.

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We are on the lower slopes of the Carpathians. The air is fresh and pure, fragrant just now with the scent of new-mown hay. Many plum orchards and pretty woods are near, with winding streams trickling through them. In a short stroll this afternoon we gathered an armful of field flowers of the most varied species; parti-coloured columbines were the loveliest of them. The pastoral quiet of the country-side is most restful. The soft swish of the scythes as the reapers cut the thick grass and clover, the sweet notes of the birds, the humming of bees, are soothing sounds. One can hardly believe such things as trains or automobiles exist!

The mineral water is in wells, generally shallow, though some go very deep. All day long the windlasses are

at work, drawing the water for the morning baths. The water in this neighbourhood is only used for bathing, but in a charming glade not two miles distant there is a tiny mineral spring (isvor) welling up, which is very good for drinking. It is just as Mother Nature made it. One carries a cup in one's pocket and stoops down to fill it, without ceremony and without expense.

Our meals are simplicity itself—every meal exactly the same menu! Madame Poetash very amiably has our morning coffee prepared with theirs, and brought us by a servant. For the noon and evening repasts we eat olives, borch, boiled eggs, roast fowl, salad, cheese, fruit (if we bring it ourselves), Turkish coffee; wine is forbidden the rheumatic people here, so the proprietor of the “birt” (wayside wine-shop) must be too depressed to offer any variety in the menus. There is a more pretentious restaurant near the centre of the town, but one experience of waiting an hour to be served with the toughest of beefsteaks decided us to return to our neighbour.

In our walks we sometimes meet peasants trudging to town with raspberries, sour cream, green corn or melons, and turn their footsteps in the direction of our abode, with glad rejoicings. One day we met a woman carrying a nice pat of butter on an earthen dish. I had not seen butter since my arrival in Vuleani and was determined to have it. She seemed loath to part with it, objecting that there was no sense in her going to town if she sold the butter on the way; that she could not give me the butter without the dish and needed it at home. However, tempted by the price we offered and our buying the dish as well, she finally relinquished her hold on it. We were a good two miles from the “birt,” but B. carefully carried our treasure back. We discussed the entire

way the merits of various delicious dishes we could have made with it. We delivered it into the hands of the innkeeper himself, who promised to put it in the refrigerator, and ordered a "plachinta" for the evening. This is a pastry dish of which we are both fond, and we persuaded the Poetashes to come and share the dainty with us. Alas for our high hopes! When we seated ourselves at the table, the landlord came forward, rubbing his hands apologetically. "It is most regrettable, my master, but the dog ate all your butter, which I left for a little minute on the table!" It was most regrettable—and the first time I had ever heard that dogs regaled themselves with butter!

.

We went for a picnic yesterday afternoon with a party of acquaintances. We walked and climbed up the steep hill-sides until we came to a place where there was an extended and lovely view down the valley. We watched the sun setting and were loath to return. Someone suggested remaining for a couple of hours longer, and then hiring an ox-cart from a neighbouring peasant for the return journey. So we stayed on, passing the time with songs and laughter.

When the peasant and his oxen were ready, the women of the party climbed on the sweet-smelling bundles of hay; the menfolk walked beside, and we wended our way slowly down the mountain-side. What interested us most on this pleasant excursion was the idea of fastening candles on the oxen's horns to guide us on the downward route. It was a still night and the flames burnt steadily—certainly the gait of the animals was in no way calculated to quench them!

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The women of the village are preparing the flax for

weaving into cloth, and many young girls are busy at hand-loom (rasboii) in the little yards. Silkworm culture is another "cottage" industry; they are bee-keepers as well, and thus have busy lives. The mountain villages seem to be cleaner and more attractive in every way than those on the plains. In the evenings we see the men of the village returning to their homes, scythe on shoulder or sickle in hand—silent and weary. At that hour ethereal wreaths of blue smoke curl out of every chimney, beckoning them to rest and refreshment. By nine o'clock all is silence!

PUCIOASA (SULPHUR SPRINGS).

When we drove over from Vulcani in response to an invitation to spend the day with the Admiral (B.'s uncle) and his wife, who are here for a month, we allowed ourselves to be easily persuaded to move over for the rest of our *congé*. The baths are somewhat different from those in Vulcani (though only about seven miles distant), and specific for other ailments than rheumatism. Nice-looking rooms being secured for us, we gathered up our belongings and came over two days ago.

When we retired the first night I began at once to feel strangely uncomfortable. The reason, sad to relate, was only too apparent. My numerous and lively bed-fellows forced me to rise, and I spent most of the night on a chair in the middle of the room, my toes well tucked up. I was never so near hysterics in my life! B. vigorously combated his enemies with a tin of Keating's—but was worsted ignominiously. At dawn we minutely examined our garments, and putting them gingerly on our mottled, lumpy persons, we fled from the scene of the fray! In renting another apartment our principal requirement was bareness—as few as possible lurking-places was what we wanted. We are comfortable now, but have developed most suspicious tendencies.



FOUR HILLS OF THE CARPATHIANS, VULCANI.

To face p. 64.

Pucioasa is a popular resort. Numbers of rugs, woven by the peasants, are for sale, displayed suspended on fences. Some are exceedingly pretty, others the acme of dreadful design and a discordant clash of brilliant colours. The squeak of penny whistles; the cries of the hawkers; the tent with a fat man and bearded woman—all the distractions of a rural crowd are in evidence. If disposed to eat or drink, there are booths where "mititea" (hot meat balls), highly seasoned with garlic, are sizzling on the frying-pan; halva, a Turkish sweetmeat, made of sesame and honey, or rahat (Turkish delight) are temptingly displayed; "braga," a slightly fermented sweet drink, is popular. The vendors are Turks, in faded fez and blue blouse, who dispense it from oak barrels bound with brass hoops, which they carry on their backs. They call attention to their wares by clashing together metal cups, trying to compete with the noisy balloon-sellers. Ice-cold *tzwica* is served in diminutive bulbous bottles to thirsty customers, who drink directly from them.

AT HOME AGAIN.

The days at Pucioasa passed quickly with walks, drives and *desjeuners sur l'herbe*. The Roumanians are leisurely in everything requiring physical effort, so the mildest recreations can stretch out to fill hours. Sports are unknown, even by name, to most, though tennis is beginning to attract the young people of the "smart set." The gymnasium appears to be the only place where the young men get any exercise, and there seems little enthusiasm about it. Dancing is the universal amusement and pleasure the year round. In the summer everyone lives out of doors as much as possible, and all repasts are served in the open air, in town and country. Probably this counterbalances the ill-effects of sleeping with bedroom windows hermetically sealed in winter.

Well-to-do Roumanians spend a month every year at some French or German watering-place, as a corrective for the condition of health inevitably following habitual physical inertia.

I find on the whole the Roumanians have an emotional temperament very like the Italians with whom I have come in contact, but their minds, though possessing the logical clearness characteristic of the Latin races, have a strong leaning to mysticism and that fatalistic *laissez-aller* one sees in the Russians and the Turks. They let things go their own way, because "It is destiny!" They are not in the least sentimental or romantically inclined, and never like to show surprise or appear to be taken unawares. They can hear the most surprising story or see something entirely new, such as an aeroplane, for the first time. *Se fi!* (It may be!) they remark, with a shrug of the shoulder.

CHAPTER VII

NOVEMBER 1911

BUCHAREST—CONTRASTS—EDGAR SALTUS—RESTAURANTS—TZIGANES
—CHAUSSÉE—COTRICENI—M. CALINDERU'S ART GALLERY—
MUSEUM—PIANARIOTES—QUEEN'S "MUSICALE."

NOVEMBER 1911.

To sum up my impressions of Bucharest, I would say that it is like a fascinating woman, who has many glaring shortcomings, yet withal charms in spite, or perhaps because of them. The contrast between the almost feverish modernism and distinct mediævalism is most striking. In one aspect it is Occidental, Parisian, elegant; in another, Oriental, provincial and picturesquely squalid. It is the mirror reflecting faithfully every image in turn of this old-new border country.

Arriving at a fine station, one drives through handsome gates in a luxurious carriage, drawn by prancing horses, through long streets of one-storied houses and shops. Pedlars cry their wares, peasants carry meat, fish and fruit hanging from long perches slung over the shoulder, exposed to clouds of dust. The carriage turns sharply into the *Calca Victoriei* (Way or Street of Victory), and behold, a bewildering array of handsome, imposing buildings and shop-windows attractively arranged, smooth asphalt pavements, a throng of well-dressed people, many uniforms, and an endless procession of smart turn-outs.

It is the most expensive place in which I have ever

sighed over my dollars. Edgar Saltus, in giving his impressions of Bucharest, said that he did not dream food could be so dear as he found it in Madrid, until he came here; but Bucharest restaurateurs can afford to speak slightly of Madrid—their prices soar into the empyrean! Yet what food it is! Even in Paris I have never eaten such delicious dishes as at Capsa's. His restaurant and sweetshop make a centre for fashionable loungers. Dandies, young and old, are seated at little tables, set on the pavement in fine weather, absorbing *apéritifs*, and regarding each passing woman with an appraising eye from ten in the morning till midnight.

Cafés and restaurants play an important rôle in the gay life of the capital. Enesco's is noted for the variety and originality of the *hors d'œuvres*, and it was in that garden, planted with trees and vines, I first heard the Lautari play. There was no piano, but a kind of large harp laid on its side and played by small drumsticks was used instead. The leader, a violinist famous throughout Europe, had decorations pinned all over the front of his coat. A friend of B.'s told me that one night he was so affected by his playing, he sent the man a tip of two hundred dollars. In days gone by the boyars, when pleased with the gipsy musicians, would invite their chief to the table and offer him a glass of wine. After he had drunken their health, the glass was passed around and often filled to the brim with gold pieces. Sometimes even to-day one of these swarthy violinists will fix his attention on a lovely woman, and seem to play for her and her alone—even approaching her table and bending over to play softly in her ear. *Noblesse oblige*—her host, of course, is gallantly generous.

The best shops are on the Boulevard Elizabeta, Calea Victoriei and Strada Lipscani (Leipzig Street). One is transported to Paris through their windows—even the



A WELL-TO-DO PEASANT'S HOME.

idea of calling them by some name, such as "The Three Blue Stars," "The Parrot" and "Bon Gout," is French. Some of the signs are really odd, such as "The Lion and the Sugar Cone" on a pastry shop, and "The Golden Chop" on a restaurant. I'm afraid it would be rather tough!

Even in exclusive neighbourhoods one sees a palace and a hovel cheek by jowl. Chickens are universally kept, the crowing of the cocks being a great nuisance at early dawn, but preferable to the howling of the dogs in provincial towns.

Every fine afternoon from four till seven it is a pleasant distraction to drive in the *Chaussée Kisselef*, a little sister to the Bois de Boulogne. Everyone goes to take the air and see who else is there. The beauty and elegance of the women are remarkable; every visitor to Bucharest comments on them. There are a number of *café chantants* and open-air restaurants on either side of the wide driveway, where it is particularly lively at night. In May a pretty battle of flowers is an annual event on the *chaussée*. This year Prince Carol was the centre of attraction, pelting the pretty girls vigorously with blossoms, himself the target of hundreds of bouquets—his dogcart was literally buried in them.

Cotriceni, the palace of the Crown Prince, is outside the town, a fine stone mansion, surrounded by a beautiful park, in one corner of which the Princess Marie has arranged an unusual collection of wooden crosses gathered together from out-of-the-way corners, to preserve them from decay. They have a great variety of shape and design, and many are painted—together a fascinating outdoor museum.

For the artistically or musically inclined, Bucharest offers many attractions—symphony concerts, good operas, *musicales*, art exhibitions are so numerous that one could spend all one's time enjoying them. Everyone seems

to have some accomplishment, for it is a common thing to spend an impromptu musical evening, all those present taking part most naturally and simply. Two notable private art collections are open occasionally, and I particularly enjoyed visiting M. Calinderu's gallery, especially as the courtly old man accompanied us on our round, explaining and commenting. His residence is a rather small, old-fashioned house, to which a modern art gallery has been added, the two being connected by a covered passage at the back of a square paved courtyard. All over the outside walls are inserted tiles and plaster bas-reliefs; there are niches for statues and wrought-iron brackets project from unexpected angles. One room in the house has been left as it was in the time of M. Calinderu's grand-parents, with half the floor one step higher than the other. On the dais are placed two broad divans, covered with multi-coloured cushions, a Turkish brass brazier standing between them. The entire floor is covered by a red Brussels carpet with a sprawling yellow leaf design, the unevenly plastered walls being painted with a big conventional pattern in red. The only other furniture is a round brass tray on a low stand, holding a quaint coffee set of thick red porcelain, and a chest inlaid with mother-of-pearl. In another room M. Calinderu pointed out to me a short chaplet of amber beads, the property of his grandmother; even now elderly women are often seen fingering such smooth beads by the hour. We inspected a heterogeneous collection of curios—bridles, whips, shells, post-cards, tanagras, etchings, first editions—all pell-mell—a lovely statuette beside a "Present from Margate." In one bedroom a four-poster bed, guarded by a flight of carved-wood cherubs suspended by their wings from the ceiling on fine wires, reminded me of the childhood prayer, "Four Angels around my head."

Going across to the Art Gallery proper, we found a

valuable collection of pictures, well arranged. The room which charmed me most contained several paintings by Grigoresco. This Roumanian artist has succeeded as has no other in making one feel the poetry and mystery of his native land—its luminous atmosphere, its brilliant sunshine, its deep, unfathomable shadows. The only English artist represented in this eclectic collection is Lavery—a large canvas in the place of honour in the main *salle*. The subject is “Hope,” an ethereal woman in flowing blue draperies, holding a shining crystal at arm’s length, just out of reach of the eager, outstretched hands of youth and age, poverty and riches. Another notable collection is that of M. Simu, arranged in a classic gallery, where pictures by French artists are in the majority.

Among the treasures of Bucharest is a collection of twelve pieces of massive gold plate in the National Museum. These interesting pieces aroused much discussion among the antiquaries of Europe when they were discovered by a peasant while ploughing at Pietroasa in 1837. Everything points to the conclusion that they were buried in the earth by a Visigoth chief when that tide of invasion swept over Dacia in the days before the Roman Conquest. It is difficult to believe that such fine artistic metalwork can be the work of barbarians. In front of the Museum is a modest bronze statue of Mihai the Brave, one of Roumania’s warrior-princes of the sixteenth century; an arresting figure in history, his statue is a hallowed symbol of former glory and an earnest of what may be again.

Of all the “sights,” however, the one which appeals to me most is the Ethnological Museum, to which Madame Elise Bratiano has lent a collection of national costumes, ancient and modern. I have spent many happy, profitable hours in examining the intricate embroidery of these exquisite dresses. In this museum, also, is a livery

worn by Prince Cuza's coachman. It looks something like the harlequin's dress in a Christmas play! Then, too, there are stands where Easter eggs are preserved, showing original designs by peasants, and in others are old woodcuts and sketches of the country many years ago. Paintings of the Greek Phanariote princes show them dressed in Oriental splendour in long velvet mantles, edged with rich fur and fastened with jewelled clasps. Diamond aigrets adorn their head-gear, which is sometimes a folded turban, sometimes a high fur bonnet. Phanar (a Turkish word meaning lighthouse) is the name of the quarters of Constantinople, and because the Greek merchant princes lived in that quarter on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus, they were called "Phanariotes."

The history of their reigns is a long tragedy. Intrigues at Constantinople caused them to disappear mysteriously, or to be suddenly recalled to Turkey, where their heads frequently paid the price for real or imaginable abuses of power. Their tenure of office was never very long—barely a few months in many cases. Each in turn paid the Sublime Porte a round sum in gold for the nomination as governor to one of the Roumanian provinces, determined to recover the purchase money and make a fortune besides during his term of office. Knowing that dear friends at home were trying to oust him from the lucrative post, he hastened to "get rich quick." The lands were farmed out to Armenian, Greek and Jewish overseers. These wrung overwhelming taxes with savage cruelty from the poor Roumanians, who, kept in ignorance and poverty, were sunken to the level of serfs. The gipsies, veritable slaves, were only freed sixty years ago. The native nobility (boyars), to save themselves and their families from annihilation, were obliged to join issue with the Phanariotes, accepting places in the puppet Courts. It

surprised me at first to find that the Turks are not hated by the Roumanians, who reserve all their bitterness for the Jewish and Greek extortioners of blood and money in the past. The explanation is to be found in the fact that the Turks did not come directly into contact with the people at all, whereas it was to their representatives that the tribute had to be delivered. Frequently the complaints of the people were an excuse for the removal of one prince and the appointment of a successor more acceptable to the country, who had secretly promised better treatment and lighter taxes in the event of his nomination.

In reading Professor Jorga's admirable account of Roumania's history, I had a feeling of pity for the school-children obliged to learn the interminable list of Phanariote princes and the dates of their reigns. It makes English history dates a very simple matter!

Not all the Greek princes were rapacious villains, however. Some were mild and enlightened, and to their introduction of French culture Roumania owes a debt of deep gratitude; at the magic contact with Latin ideals Roumania found herself. The national anthem begins: "Awake, Roumanians, from the sleep of death which for centuries has enchained you!"

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The race-course is one of the most attractive spots in Bucharest. There on Sunday afternoons, particularly in the spring and fall, are to be seen the wealth, beauty and aristocracy of the country. The grand-stand is imposing and well-proportioned. From the tiers of seats on the roof there is an excellent view over the surrounding country-side. M. Marghiloman's horses seem to win all the races. Perhaps that is the reason the public takes no passionate interest in watching them—it is a foregone conclusion. I was rather amused when I was

there to notice that the majority of (presumable !) spectators seemed blandly unconseious when the races were being run, continuing to stroll and chat with backs to the horses !

An invitation to a Court *musicale* was an agreeable incident on this visit. Luckily I had brought a suitable frock with me—an overdress of silver green and pink shot taffeta, with a slip of the same shades of chiffon. The invitation only came on the morning of the day appointed, as Her Majesty had just learned that I was in town. The hairdresser was called in to wave my hair as artistically as possible, and I started out much pleased with the honour of being commanded to such a small afternoon party. On arriving I was bowed from one imposing servant to another, until the curtain of a large room was drawn back and I heard my name announced. Immediately opposite the door sat Madame Bengesco, one of the Queen's Ladies-in-Waiting and an old acquaintance of mine, who came forward at once to receive me, and escorted me to where the Queen sat in the alcove. Her Majesty greeted me most kindly, and after I had been served with tea, asked me to sit down beside her. We had a long talk before the music began. A youthful protégée of the Queen had just returned from Germany, where she had been studying music, and the ten or twelve people present had been asked to hear her play the piano. She was a talented musician and rendered a number of selections with spirit and feeling. We were delighted, especially the Queen, who is herself an accomplished performer on the piano. During the music, in fact all the time, the Queen was occupied with a piece of tatting—*frivolité* it is called in French, and she said jokingly it was her only one. She worked quickly, glancing at the design beside her on the seat—an intricate one designed to be an altar-cloth for a church in Jerusalem.



CARMEN SYLVA, TATTING.

Wishing to show me a view from her private apartment window, she invited me to accompany her thither. Together we made a leisurely inspection of the bibelots in the room, chatting the while. She was struck by my having prematurely white hair, as she herself had had the same thing happen to her. She wore her snowy hair in Louis XV curls all over her head, an original arrangement very becoming with her trailing draperies. She wished me to give up the mareel wave and have my hair curled. "Curls belong to white hair," she said. The next morning an autograph letter was brought me from Her Majesty with full directions for the care and arrangement of my locks.

CHAPTER VIII

MARCH-MAY 1912

GALATZ—PRECEDENTS—BALLS—EUROPEAN COMMISSION—ENGAGEMENTS—EARTHQUAKES—MILITARY PARADE—GENERAL GORDON—MAZEPPA—CUZA.

MARCH 1912.

SINCE I have been here the sofa has assumed a leading rôle in my life. As a new-comer, I am ceremoniously led to it in every drawing-room. I could find my way to it now in the dark, as it is invariably across the corner opposite the drawing-room door. For a member of the family to occupy this seat of honour would be an unpardonable breach of etiquette. If, while on a visit, a second caller arrives older than myself, I immediately vacate it in her favour, and she does the same should a third arrive. It is something like a stately ladies' chain!

The question of precedent seems of great moment, and occasionally causes heart-burnings, I fancy. B. earnestly instructs me as to who's who before we set forth to social functions, but alas for the defects of a democratic education! The names are long and complicated—I never can remember who are Jews, who Gentiles, who Greeks or Austrians.

At my first ball I was startled and hurt to be left by my partner after one circuit of the room. Presently I noticed it was a rule of the game, as it were. The men stand in the middle of the ballroom deciding on their future partners. The masculine attire deserves as much

notice as that of the fair sex. For one black-coated civilian there are ten officers. Most of the military contingent glitter with gold braid and medals. Some uniforms are red, some brown, some black, the collars and sleeves slashed with yellow, pale blue or pink; all are fashioned to show a slender waist to the best advantage. Patent-leather boots, moulded to fit foot and ankle without a wrinkle; perfectly cut white gloves, every shining perfumed hair in place, an occasional monocle fixed immovably to the eye—this is the ensemble presented before the music strikes up. Then each rapidly approaches the lady of his choice, smartly clicks the heels together in bowing, and after once around the room deposits his partner at the exact point of departure—which is usually beside her chaperon, for the mammas are fixtures in comfortable chairs along the wall. If the girl is popular, a line of future partners are waiting, and no sooner has she left one man than another arm encircles her waist, and they are off. Etiquette demands the one circuit, but the same man often dances several times with one girl. There is a buffet supper generally, but few seem to care to eat or drink, being intensely absorbed in the pleasure of dancing. Waltzes are the favourites, though the younger men two-step well. There is always a sort of Sir Roger de Coverley, in which old and young take part. It is great fun, a leader calling out the figures, often invented on the spur of the moment. The latter part of the evening is devoted to a cotillion, the favours being ribbon cockades and rosettes of different colours, or dainty nosegays.

Galatz has a charm of its own; it is quite different from any other Roumanian town, chiefly because it is the residence of the European Commission of the Danube. The eight Commissioners represent Britain, France, Italy, Austria, Germany, Turkey, Russia and Roumania, and, with the exception of the French delegate, have resi-

dences in Galatz and remain the year round. They are the natural leaders of their colonies, and do a good deal of entertaining, which has the charm of the unexpected, for one meets people from the four corners of the earth. Besides receiving in their own homes, they give, collectively, balls and other fêtes every spring and autumn in the palace of the Commission, a large building where their meetings are held. They are collective proprietors, also, of a pretty steam yacht, *Carolus Primus*, on which they invite favoured friends for excursions on the river. Each Commissioner is President in turn for six months, and when he takes office a *stationnière* of his nationality comes from Constantinople for the inauguration. Of course, we enjoy meeting all the officers, but are especially pleased when the *Barham* makes its appearance.

This spring the Germans had their turn. The commander of the ship was Prince von Yenbourg, a relation, I understand, of our own Royal Family. Naturally, feminine Galatz was on tiptoe of excitement to meet the lion of the day. We were bidden to a dinner at the German Commissioner's the night of his arrival. The Commissioner's wife is the only other "American" in town, and entertains charmingly. Alas! for romance. Von Yenbourg was short, fat, red-faced and forty-five at least. The pretty girls present consoled themselves with the well-set-up young officers who accompanied him. It was a large party, and from my place beside our host I could not see very well what was going on at the other end of the table. However, we could hear sounds of laughter and gaiety. A large variety of excellent wines was served. When we arose, we left the gentlemen in the dining-room. A long interval followed—the "noble" prince was very hilarious when he came into the drawing-room. He invited us most pressingly on board the *Taurus* for the following afternoon, and told us gallantly how fond he was of pretty women. He made a number

of jokes and sallies in German, but unfortunately very few of those present could understand that language. About eleven the butler appeared with a large tray, on which were jugs of iced beer and plates of salted biscuits. He first offered this refreshment to His Serene Highness, who blinked frowningly at him, then, waving his hand, commanded "Champagne!" I forbore to look at my hostess, but I must confess it was an effort.

Naturally, the Commissioners have other duties than entertaining; all Danubian affairs from the Iron Gates to the sea are in their hands and an army of employees at their command. They have their own flag, and are supposed to be neutral in case of war—but I wonder! Besides the Commission circle one meets the Consuls, the heads of big shipping houses, bankers of different nationalities, landed proprietors and army officers, so there is plenty of choice.

Among the Roumanians and Greeks I am often surprised to find that there is a great disparity between their clothes, jewels and general "chie" in appearance, and the comfort and taste displayed in their homes. On meeting any Englishwoman one can usually judge her home background and circumstances by her appearance and dress; indeed, usually more thought and care are expended on the home than on the person. Not so here! A smart, well-turned-out woman may live in a dull house, furnished in a nondescript fashion, and, though fashionable on the street, sit about, corsetless, in dressing-gown and mobcap at home. A good table, food far more delicious and well-prepared than is the general rule with us, is served in haphazard fashion, except on formal occasions. Some families have two dining-rooms, one for every day and one for company, and one sees a truly Latin love of parade.

On Sundays and holidays there are throngs of fashionably dressed people on the Strada Domnească (the Princely

Street), and carriages are engaged the previous day for the classic drive to the Public Gardens and back to Sure's or Carol's confectionery shop for refreshment, where tables are set on the pavement, quite blocking the passage. It is especially crowded in May and June, when the miles of linden-trees are in blossom and acacias and roses by the thousands perfume the air.

The gardens are delightful in every street, roses being the prime favourites among the denizens. They thrive exceedingly well in this climate and are cultivated as standards, the mass of blossom spreading umbrella-like around the neat, green-painted sticks, topped by shining red or green balls to which the bushes are tied.

The gardens are fenced in on all sides, rarely adjoining the residence, but separated from it by a driveway. The arrangement of the flower-beds is very formal, set at even distances amid gravelled paths. Lawns are rare achievements, the grass being sown afresh each year.

I often say to B. that I flatter myself that I showed remarkably sound judgment to be born in Canada and marry here. Girls have so little liberty. They are generally brought up by foreign governesses, and then sent to a finishing school in France, Germany or Switzerland. At eighteen they return, and are immediately launched into *le monde*, closely chaperoned, never even going shopping or to play tennis without some older relative along. If pleasing, pretty, or, what is even more important, if they are well-dowered, suitors send a mutual friend to find if the parents are favourably inclined to accept them into the family. Providing all is satisfactory, papa informs his daughter, and if she has no decided objection the young man arrives at the house, preceded by a large bouquet and bringing a gift for his fiancée—usually some diamond ornament. The engaged couple never see each other alone. Therefore engagements are short, as they are wearing for the family.

It is after the wedding that the young woman has her first taste of liberty and her good times. If at twenty-five she is not married everyone regards her as an old maid. On the whole, I think as many happy marriages would result from this system as from ours, were divorce not so easy. Remarriage of *divorcées*, even three or four times, is regarded with indulgence. It is quite bewildering to a stranger when she meets the past, present and future husband of a pretty woman in the same drawing-room!

APRIL.

This Easter holiday we spent at Constantinople. It is so near Roumania that it seems strange more people from here don't visit it. The Roumanians undertake journeys readily, but when they plan a trip, eagerly turn their faces to the West. Before we sailed from Constantza on the *Imperator Trajan*, one of the excellent State Line boats, we had a few hours in Constantza, and had time to see the grain elevators and the wonderful improvements made in the port since the Roumanians took it over from Russia in 1877. It is pleasant in summer, for there are hotels in plenty to receive visitors, and the new Casino looks attractive. The statue of Ovid in the square recalls the antiquity of the site as a town.

The Black Sea behaved very well. The journey takes only thirteen hours, and as we sailed in the evening it wouldn't have mattered very much, anyway, if there had been "dirty weather," which, according to naval people, must be the rule, not the exception.

We got up at six to see the entrance to the Bosphorus. The beauty of the sail from there to Stamboul grips one with emotion. It is quite the most exquisite panorama I have ever seen, especially lovely at this season, with fruit trees in blossom on the sloping hill-sides. We were

lucky to have fine weather the whole week, and I have seldom had more absorbingly interesting days. B.'s chief delight was in the bazaars, where he bargained interminable hours for carpets and embroideries, sipping coffees by the dozen with the merchants.

We brought back several treasures with us, and have the satisfaction of thinking we got them at the lowest possible price. We were able to dispense with a guide, as B. has been there many times, and it was so agreeable going about "on our own." In spite of "doing the sights" *à l'Américaine*, there are many of the historic spots we were not able to take in, and I am already planning a second visit as soon as possible. One is steeped in an atmosphere of romance and adventure in Constantinople—anything might happen there. It seemed hardly surprising to come face to face with Canadian friends who I thought were on the other side of the world. We greeted each other as if it were the most natural thing in the world for us all to be here, and actually to meet in the narrow streets of Scutari.

MAY.

Ever since I came to Galatz people have told me about earthquakes, but I was unbelieving until the other day. I had been calling, and on my return about seven o'clock noticed the sky was a curious copper colour and the air very oppressive. Before taking off my hat, I descended to the dining-room to see how preparations were going on for dinner. The table was partly set. Just as I was speaking to the maid a violent upheaval startled us. The china danced; the silver on the sideboard fell to the floor with a crash, as did several pictures from the wall. I ran under the doorway; the maid disappeared from my view with a frightened shriek. It was a "really truly" earthquake—so severe that several small houses in town and an old church fell down, while many others



THE PALACE OF CULTURE IN GALATZ.

40 1000
2000 1000

were seamed with cracks. B. was in the Intime Club garden when the quake occurred, and realizing it was exceptionally severe, came home as quickly as he could to see how I liked my first experience. For two days we talked of nothing else; then other events replaced it as a topic of conversation.

The following week we had retired for the night very early. I was awakened from a sound sleep by a noise. I listened intently—the crockery on the washstand was rattling, the furniture creaking. Alarmed, I woke B. He listened—the shaking continued, then stopped, then began again. We lighted up the room. The very walls seemed trembling. B. went to see what conditions were in the rest of the house. All seemed quiet. Much mystified, we decided to spend the rest of the night in another room on the lower floor. Next day we made inquiries. No one else in the street had felt the disturbance. It was only in the evening we discovered the cause of our private earthquake. An open-air cinema had been installed in the square at the corner, and had been used for the first time the previous night; the vibrations coming just opposite our bedroom, which is in an exposed wing of the house, had made everything jump about.

MAY 10TH (OLD STYLE).

I witnessed the Military Parade to-day from the grand-stand in front of the Prefecture. Though I have seen it every year—the last time in Bucharest—I never fail to have a thrill of pride in the smart and trig appearance of the men and their equipments. The troops took over an hour to pass, enthusiastic hand-clapping from the onlookers greeting the colonels of each regiment as they saluted the General. After the parade we went to the Prefect's apartment, where we listened to some patriotic speeches and drank the King's health, each

clinking his glass with his neighbour's before sipping the champagne. It was like the tinkling of tiny bells all through the room.

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Every time I walk down the wide, shady street of the Brave Michael (Mihai Bravul) my heart beats just a little faster to think that the feet of Gordon of Khartoum have trod the same path many times. He first came to Galatz as a young officer in 1857 after the Crimean War, and remained two years engaged in determining the frontiers of Bessarabia as fixed by the Treaty of Paris. Following his adventurous career in China, fifteen years later, he was appointed as British delegate to the Danubian Commission and returned to Galatz, but only for a comparatively short time. It was then he accepted the Governorship of the Sudan. While delegate he occupied a modest house in the quiet street overlooking Lake Bratesh. Some of the older Galatz-ites remember him distinctly, and have preserved letters from him. His religious mania, curious economies and shabby attire are the things most vividly remembered of him—eccentricities emphasized by comparison with his pleasure-loving colleagues. They say, however, that his subsequent actions were just what they would have expected of him. An heroic spirit so permeated his whole being that it was apparent to the most casual observer.

Another warrior of renown, whose career touched Galatz, was the Cossack chief, Mazeppa—the hero of Byron's poem. Dying in exile, his body was laid to rest in a tiny church, Sfta Maria, perched on the high cliffs overlooking the Danube, where it remained for many years. Later the Cossacks took his remains back to their own mysterious land.

The origin of Galatz is lost in the mists of antiquity. At one time in the Middle Ages it was a city republic

levying dues and tithes on the surrounding country. Some of the houses are veritable fortresses, with amazingly thick walls. In the gardens are remains of the slaves' quarters, where the gipsy artisans lived. There are cellars of vast extent, with labyrinths of passages under a great part of the older section of the city; these were storehouses and places of refuge. The very site of some had been forgotten, and was rediscovered by the surface eaving in and revealing their existence. One of the most remarkable in extent is under the residence formerly occupied by Prince Cuza, who was living there in 1859 when informed of his election as Prince Regnant of Wallachia and Moldavia—the elections which united the two principalities under one ruler.

JUNE.

We are off to Switzerland for the next three months, where we will meet the family. How the years have flown! I only hope the next three may pass as happily as the three since I came. How strange is destiny! Who would have dreamed, when I set out on that long trip around the world, that B. in this corner of the earth, remote from Canada, was setting forth also? How many hundreds of apparently trivial incidents seemed to work together to make us cross each other's path in Cairo!

Everything that happened on our journey to Hong Kong—our separation there and encounter again at Tokio—is indelibly registered in my memory, even to the negro who claimed "second sight"—he who pointed me out as B.'s future wife, though he had never seen me before.

CHAPTER IX

SEPTEMBER 1912-MAY 1914

DOWN THE DANUBE FROM BUDA-PESTH—COUNTRY VISITS—TOBOGGANING—MANOR AND VILLAGE LIFE—MOVING TO A NEW HOME—CAMPAIGN IN BULGARIA IN 1913—VISIT OF KING AND QUEEN TO GALATZ—CEREMONIES ON BOARD THE "ELIZABETA."

SEPTEMBER 1912.

RETURNING from our trip, we sailed down the Danube from Buda-Pesth. It is an interesting thing to have done once, but we will never repeat the experience if we can avoid it. The steamers are small and overcrowded with noisy passengers and stop at all the small ports, so that one's night's rest is disturbed every hour by the ship's bells and whistle. We were three nights on board, leaving Buda-Pesth one evening and arriving at Galatz the third day following, about five o'clock. The scenery is rather monotonous, except for a few hours on nearing the Roumanian frontier (Iron Gates), where the hills rise abruptly from the very brink of the river with noble grandeur. Turnu Severin, on the Roumanian border, looked cool and clean—quite the most attractive town on the route.

Immediately after our return I went to pay a round of visits to friends who have homes in the country. It is very much like country-house visiting in England, the same type of hospitality prevailing. Some of our acquaintances keep open house the year round even having separate apartments in the park especially for guests;

others make a point of Christmas and Easter parties, when thirty or forty friends arrive and the jolliest kind of festivities are enjoyed.

One of these parties was rather unusual. We were invited for Christmas week to a country house near Tecuci. In talking over plans for our entertainment, our hostess had told us that we would have tobogganing. She and her husband had recently been at St. Moritz, and had enjoyed the sport so much that they had brought back several bob-sleighs in order that the party of twenty guests might enjoy sliding down a steep hill on the estate. On our arrival it was very mild weather, with no sign of snow. Three or four days passed—everyone tapped the barometer, consulted the thermometer, and cast anxious eyes to the sky, for all wished to try the novelty. At last, one morning, on looking out of the window, I saw snow had fallen in the night—hardly enough, however, to more than powder the grassy park. At breakfast our host was in high spirits. "Get ready, all of you," he cried. "We are going to drive over to the hill and spend the day tobogganing." I was surprised to hear this, as my experience in Canada made me very well aware that no sleigh, however light, would slide over that gossamer film of snow. In confiding my doubts to B., I got the answer: "He is a wizard—you will see fine sport!" We drove over in wheeled carriages. I elected to go in a "behunka." This vehicle resembles a bob-sleigh on wheels, well padded and cushioned, with room for four or five people to ride one behind the other, their arms around each other's waists, and feet sticking out on either side. Drawn by a swift horse, the "behunka" bumped merrily over the fields, everyone clinging to everyone else in desperate efforts to keep from falling off. At last we got to our destination, quite exhausted from laughing and the jolting.

A well-made slide ran down the steepest side of the hill. The presence of a crowd of peasants with shovels explained the miracle—they had carefully scraped up the snow for acres around and packed it down solidly at the right place. What fun it was! All day we slid down and climbed up that hill. Some of the peasants, grinning with amusement at the antics of the "boyars," remained to bank up the places worn thin by the runners. The sun shone; there was no wind; the air had just the tang in it to make exercise pleasant. At lunch-time a huge sailcloth was spread on the ground in a sheltered spot, and a monumental *pâté de lièvre* and other dainties disappeared with amazing rapidity.

Country houses differ greatly. Some are palaces; some simple, old-fashioned, rambling mansions; but in all lavish expenditure and every modern luxury are in evidence. Foreign domestics are in attendance, as the Roumanian peasant has too independent a nature to make a good house-servant. Ever since my arrival in Roumania these visits have been a great source of pleasure to me, and acquaintances made during them are now among my cherished friends. In one delightful house I have stayed several times with the Roumanian poetess, Hélène Vacaresco, a woman with a romantic history, very lovable and a witty conversationalist. As is natural, with her gifts she is usually very much in the clouds, and her personal appearance is the last of her preoccupations—some part of her dress is always slightly askew; and this was a very great trial to her chic hostess.

To me, from America, it is somewhat startling to see well-maintained parks, handsome buildings replete with every convenience, including perfectly trained servants, within the manor walls; and without its portals, hovels, primitive living conditions, superstition and ignorance; motor-cars passing oxen-carts on the roads—the twentieth century whirling past the fifteenth! To those accustomed

to it, this state of things causes no comment or surprise ; it "gives me to think," as the French say.

Of late years the Government has obliged the proprietors to introduce many reforms, such as maintaining doctors and schools, and some landowners, like M. Chissoveloni, of Ghidigeni, have built model villages and endowed hospitals. The next generation of peasants will have a wider outlook and a chance for education their elders lacked.

In their present state of development they exhibit many laudable characteristics—they are hospitable, gentle, and remarkably intelligent. The tenacity of their attachment to their native soil—the actual spot, the very village they inhabit—has withstood the invasions and persecutions of centuries. The price they have paid for their survival is a certain pliability of moral character common to all people who have long worn a foreign yoke. Self-interest is the paramount consideration of their lives—the good of the community, altruistic aspirations, are beyond their vision. They are *rusé* to a degree, and have a deep-rooted distrust of innovations. The great majority are quite illiterate.

DECEMBER.

Our lives are entirely revolutionized ! Everything now centres around the baby. He certainly brought us luck, as a few days after his arrival B. got his promotion and is now Captain-Commander. Our friends overwhelm us with kindness, and are watching with friendly anxiety the process of bringing up Barbu Victor Gordon *d'Anglaise* ! "Barbu" was decided on after a long process of elimination, because B. wanted it ; "Victor" because the Admiral wanted the boy called for him—he is the godfather ; and "Gordon," because it seems particularly appropriate, as Gordon lived in Galatz, and it is darling Constance's second name as

well. In spite of the length of his name, the most beautiful, wonderful child in the world is gaining the maximum number of ounces every day, and kicks about, quite free of swaddling-bands. Our invaluable Alexandrina (the cook) was discovered surreptitiously pinning a red bow on his basket! "Just to be on the safe side!" she pleaded. So, of course, it stayed on. Every day she "lays out the cards" and sees a rosy future in store for him.

JANUARY 1913.

Preparations for the christening kept us busy since New Year's. It was all done in the Roumanian fashion. It was a never-to-be-forgotten moment when the Admiral brought Barbu to me in his arms after he had been baptized, and said in the traditional phrase: "I bring you a Christian—cherish him!" I have a handsome brooch and filmy lace veil as souvenirs of the occasion, the gifts of the godparents, who presented the baby with an elaborate trousseau; he will never be able to wear out half the wonderful trunkful. B. designed the memento medals, which are original and were greatly admired.

Later.

We have been looking about for another house, as this one is badly arranged from the nursery point of view, and have decided on a nice place almost directly opposite, which has a fine, big garden and a place for a garage, which we shall need when the longed-for car arrives from London in the spring.

The arrangement of rooms in the usual houses of one story here is such that different occupants can use any given room for any service. For instance, one family may use a room as a dining-room; the next comers as a bedroom; the next as a *salon*. Nurseries are evidently never planned for.

There are no clothes-closets, no cupboards, no mantel-pieces, no open fire-places. The windows are invariably of the double French variety. In each room is a big stove, generally placed in a corner, on which one depends for the heating; furnaces (or central heating, as it is called) are only installed in the recently built homes of the wealthy. The stoves are monumental structures, sometimes made of stucco, with elaborate columns and flutings running up to the ceiling, though occasionally they are built of white or coloured tiles. Wood is used to heat them, the sticks being put in through a square brass door about three feet from the floor. They make a healthful temperature, acting also as ventilators. A manservant's entire time is needed to look after them in winter, the huge supply of wood needed being piled up in the courtyards and giving a rather rural appearance to the most urban neighbourhood. Coal, used in small self-feeders for heating halls and passages, is a luxury imported from England, costing a hundred lei (twenty dollars) a ton. I imagine that in the future oil-heaters will be devised, as oil is plentiful and cheap.

JUNE (ACROSS THE ROAD—STRADA CAROL 8).

We are settled in the new home, but we have not changed the number, as the assessors conveniently altered the numbering on the street just as we were moving on Sfte. Gheorghe's Day. The moving was easy, and the house is comfortable and convenient. The garage was ready for the car when it came, and it is entirely satisfactory, as anything ordered in England always is. Benzine is so cheap that it costs us only three dollars a week to run it, and it is going and coming constantly. Now we are looking forward to Constance's visit. If it were not for war and rumours of war—this sad Balkan entanglement—our sky would be without a cloud. Every week there is a meeting of the Red Cross.

We make bandages of various sorts and take home hospital shirts to make up. In the evening, whoever comes in to see us takes a hand at the work.

JULY.

Hardly had B. brought Constance from Lausanne, whither he journeyed in order to escort her here, and while the joy of meeting her was fresh in our hearts, than the news came from Bucharest that Roumania contemplated entering Bulgaria in order to oblige her to live up to her treaty obligations with her former Allies, Greece and Servia. For several days there was excitement and uncertainty. One night we were asleep, when the most horrible clamour awoke us. All the factory sirens and steamship whistles blew, every bell in Galatz rang—a more infernal din could not be imagined. The whole household in different stages of deshabille rushed to the hall. B. was sure of the significance of it. “War is declared—it is certain,” he said; and he was right. Our ears are filled with the rolling of drums, the blowing of trumpets. Every day the clatter of artillery and cavalry passing in our streets brings us to the windows. When the Galatz regiments entrained we went to the station. No man left without a flower, cigarettes and chocolates. B. is determined to go to join the naval detachment sent to Nicropolis, though his post is here. He is so unhappy and restless I find it in my heart to wish that he can arrange it. He cannot sleep, haunted as he is with the thought that he is not at the scene of action. Many of his comrades have left—everyone is preoccupied. We hope there will be no serious fighting. Bulgaria cannot be in a strong position—but one can never tell!

Later.

B. has gone! He just knew a few hours before his departure that his request had been granted, and that

he is to have charge of the arrangements for the troops to cross the bridges of boats which have been thrown across the Danube. Constance and I accompanied him on a gunboat as far as Braila. I quite disgraced myself and broke down at the last moment. Now I am interested only in the telegrams from the front—there are so few, and they are so contradictory. The Admiral has been recalled to duty on the reserve force after several years' retirement and is coming to Galatz. It will be a comfort to have him near us.

SEPTEMBER.

"All's well that ends well!" The Bulgarian affair turned out to be *une guerre en dentelle*. The Roumanian Army made an uneventful promenade nearly as far as Sofia. The only sad part of the campaign was the outbreak of cholera, from which many of our poor soldiers died. B. is back, well content with the six weeks' experience he has had. The Admiral has returned home, and we are trying to give Constance some diversion and entertainment after our anxious summer. She will be obliged soon to leave us. Life is quickly becoming normal again. The Roumanians are pleased with the outcome, and all eyes are turned to Bucharest and the peace conference.

OCTOBER.

One day lately, Christine, the nurse, being out, I unreflectingly decided to take my small son for a promenade. My appearance, pushing the baby-carriage, caused a sensation in the town. Men at the club asked my husband if it were true that I had done this unheard-of thing, and if I were likely to repeat the experience, meaning to be on hand next time, to verify the rumour with their own eyes. A neighbour, thrilled over my (unconscious!) daring, confessed to me that she would like to do the same thing. I urged her on, but she shook her head

wisely: "No, it's all right for you. Because you are from America, people think it queer but 'chic.' If I did it, they would think I was a snob, or crazy!"

NOVEMBER.

Quite unexpectedly Princess Cantacuzene asked me one day last month if I would be one of a committee she desired to form in order to begin a sort of kindergarten for working women's children. The idea originated in Bucharest, and friends had asked her to take up the work here. Though greatly desiring to do so, she would not consent to undertake the organization unless I would promise to help her. Living two hours' journey out of town makes it too difficult for her to superintend the details. I was enthusiastic, as such an institution is greatly needed. One hears the most heartrending tales of working women's children burning, drowning, or injuring themselves while their mothers are away from home. I like work for children—it is so full of hope and promise. B. was sceptical about my being an effective help, as I am ignorant of usual methods employed by benevolent societies here, but he was won over by the Princess's persuasive tongue.

Several others are on the committee—mostly men. Alexandre, of course, is treasurer, as he is of every society in the town. I realized after the first meeting, with surprise and pleasure, that everyone seemed to think my co-operation of value. The "Americana" delusion flourishes—any person from the New World must be resourceful and energetic, according to Galatz ideas.

The time is evidently ripe for more organized charities than has hitherto been the custom, for subscriptions have come in splendidly. We organized a cinema evening, selling the boxes for forty lei each (eight dollars), and had not enough for the applicants. That netted a very



AT AN OLD WELL.

tidy sum. We got some *porte-bonheur* (lucky) medals, and I pressed B. into service to sell them at the club when the baccarat table was in full swing. The first man who bought one for twenty lei immediately began to win, so the last ones brought in one hundred lei each.

The mayor gave us, rent free, a tumbled-down house in the poorest neighbourhood of the town—just where the need is greatest. It has a roomy courtyard, shaded with fine trees. Each member of the committee gave a piece of furniture to furnish a living-room for our superintendent, Miss Josif, a sister of the poet. We offered a policeman's family shelter, and took three of his children into the Gradina de Copil (children's garden) in order to have his wife do the cooking and cleaning. It is very primitive, but a beginning—a step forward in children's welfare.

We have just had the opening, with seventy children from three to seven years old. Such wistful eyes they have, all of them, like the models in Murillo's paintings. The mothers bring them at seven and leave them until six in the evening. Each child must bring ten banis (two cents) and a piece of bread. At ten they are given a glass of milk, and at twelve-thirty a dinner; afterwards the youngest are laid on straw mattresses on the floor of a darkened room for a siesta. They are taught to sing, to sew, to print, and so forth. Miss Josif is marvellous—how she keeps her head with so many of them I can't fathom. We are making them coloured pinafores to wear in school now, and preparing a Christmas-tree. I am dressing my dolls with clothes that come off, instead of the tight package they are accustomed to see in imitation of the babies in swaddling-bands. Nothing like instilling modern ideas in the young!

APRIL.

Spring again, and our garden looking so lovely with the vines and trees budding and gay spring flowers blooming! Now we are rejoicing in our great happiness with our little daughter. She is just two weeks old, and as round as a ball. Such a good baby—she never cries! All the household (except the amused papa) are shocked because I absolutely refuse to have her ears pierced. "You are not doing well by the child," I am earnestly assured.

MAY.

Sybil Oltea Yvonne are the names finally decided on for the wee girl, and she is to be christened on board the cruiser *Elizabeta*, of which B. is now Commander. On the same day our friends, Prince and Princess Cantacuzene, are presenting a silk flag to the ship, so it will be a gala occasion.

B. is away at present, attending the King and Queen on their annual trip on the Danube. He has gone every year for a long time, and always enjoys the two weeks extremely. They anchor in quiet, retired spots on the branches of the Danube above Braila, and towards the end of the trip are received officially at the different ports. Their visit to Galatz is an event we look forward to every spring. A kiosk is built on the dock and adorned with green branches, where ladies assemble with their arms full of flowers to greet the Queen. The King comes on shore and is received by the mayor, who offers him the traditional bread and salt before making a speech of welcome and loyalty. Then the receiving party go on board, where Carmen Sylva is seated in her wheeled chair, her gentle smile of welcome winning every heart. She greets each one of the small cosmopolitan party in his own language—her English accent is the most pleasing I have ever heard. B. says on one occasion

during the trip she had been reading aloud to them in Roumanian. Later, he picked up the book—it was in French. She had translated so unhesitatingly and idiomatically that he could hardly credit the fact that the text was in one language and her reading in another. This year's voyage ended, B. was gratified to receive the Star of Roumania, *propriu motu*, as a souvenir after the King's return to Bucharest.

Later.

Sybil's christening was a memorable one. We asked all Galatz on board. For days before, the sailors plaited garlands of willow shoots, and the whole ship inside and out was wreathed in green. Friends robbed their gardens of every flower and sent them down in clothes-baskets, so the main *salon* was a mass of blossoms. Olga and other friends made a screen of them back of the "cazan," where the baptism took place. The dear fairy godmother was radiantly beautiful, and showered the baby with good things. It seemed to me that never were my Galatz friends so dear to me than on that day of days. First the flag was presented and received officially; then blessed and sprinkled with holy water; afterwards run up to the strains of military music and hurrahs from the sailors. It was so beautifully embroidered in gold that it hung straight out from the mast. Then Sybil was christened. She behaved like an angel, turning over the leaves of the prayer-book with her tiny fingers as she lay in the priest's arms. Some pretty children presented the women with bouquets of roses and the men with button-holes, while refreshments were served. Afterwards there was dancing, the long day ending with a concert by the sailors. "Saltraiesca!" they cried heartily as I left. "Long live your little daughter!" The youngest lieutenant on board presented me with a pretty gold cross and chain from the officers and crew

to commemorate the occasion. It seems a charming coincidence that the christening should have been on the 24th—Queen Victoria's birthday—a day always associated in my mind in childhood's years with happiness and rejoicing.

CHAPTER X

JULY 1914—JANUARY 1915

AUTOMOBILE TRIP—COSMOPOLITAN PARTY—RABBI—PIATRA NEAMTZU
—BĂLZĂTESHTI—HEAVEN AND HELL—CALL TO PRAYER—SALT
MINES—SLENIC—ACCIDENTS OF THE ROAD—DEATH OF KING
CAROL.

JULY 1914.

THE outcome of weeks of planning was our departure for a ten days' trip to Slenic (Moldavia) via Bălzăteshti and Neamtzu—the F.'s in their Ford, the Count and Countess de V. in their Italian car, and the R.'s and ourselves in our English motor. With our wraps and packages wreathed about us, we looked like a modern gipsy caravan. Quite a cosmopolitan party, and a typical one of any gathering in these parts, we were eleven people, of whom Monsieur F., his wife and small son, as well as B. and Vincenzo (the chauffeur) were Roumanians; the Count and his wife Italians; our friends, the R.'s, French; Radu's governess English, and myself Canadian. I might almost call Radu international, as his grandparents were Italian, Swiss, Greek and Austrian. His paternal grandfather (the Greek) became a Roumanian subject, and his father, Monsieur F., is now a Member of Parliament.

The route was new to us all. B. kept his eyes on the road-map and guided the party to Bacau in time for lunch. The country through which we passed on the way was thickly populated. One village, Iveshti, is at

least five miles in length. Motors are not so common as to pass unnoticed ; the villagers turned to gaze at us and surrounded the cars when we stopped.

Our car was leading, and at one time we were a considerable distance in advance of the others. As we turned a sharp corner, we came face to face with an empty light cart, drawn by a pair of horses, about the size of Shetland ponies. A stout priest, the skirt of his long gown tucked up in his belt, was guiding them by a leading rein, as he walked beside them. Our apparition startled man and beasts ; in two seconds, before we could even stop, the whole three, cart and all, had toppled in a confused heap to the very bottom of a ditch. We sprang out of the car, horrified, and fearing to find the poor man lacerated or severely injured. B., Monsieur R. and Vincenzo drove to the rescue and assisted the victim to his feet. Luckily, he was quite sound and whole, except for a few scratches ; the horses were trembling, but not at all wild, and after a few unsuccessful efforts dragged the cart, now righted, to the road again. Anyone would have reasonably expected the priest to be angry or at least excited ; but no, he did not even look surprised. Our profuse explanations and apologies were met with mild, indulgent smiles. He gathered up the leading rein when Vincenzo had persuaded the nervous beasts to pass the car, and bestowing on us his blessing, went on his placid way as if nothing unusual had occurred.

From Bacau our way lay for the most part through the Neamtzu Valley, following the curves of the river and passing villages where the Jewish element seems to predominate. There is a famous Rabbi who dwells in these parts, and is supposed to have occult powers, for believers from as far off as Siberia come to consult him and beg his blessings.

At Piatra Neamtzu, a delightfully situated town embosomed in green hills, we arrived about four o'clock.

Remembering that an American of my acquaintance, the wife of a Roumanian doctor, lived here, I resolved to call on her, as we had not met since my first visits to Bucharest. I found her living in a pleasant manor, the garden of which sloped down to the river. Here, with the head of the house and his wife, lived three married sons and their families, in true patriarchal fashion. The mansion was certainly roomy enough to hold them all. Though my visit was necessarily a hurried one, I met several members of the interesting family; the other young wives were respectively French and Greek. After willy-nilly sipping a Turkish coffee, I departed with my hands full of flowers from the picturesque garden.

Bălăteshti, where we spent the night, is one of the numerous mineral-water bath resorts of Roumania. There is an old-fashioned sanatorium and a park where bathers can take gentle exercise. The waters are very efficacious, and the baths were known hundreds of years ago. Here we slept the sleep of the righteous after a long day, well satisfied with the performance of our several cars, as we had forded many wide streams *en route* without an accident.

The next morning we made a visit to two near-by monasteries, which, being my first experience of them, interested me greatly. One was a large, white, two-storied building, built in a hollow square around a church, the inner side having an arched verandah running the whole length of each story, upon which all the doors of the rooms opened. The church was an ancient one, lately restored, the walls inside and out painted with frescoes of great beauty. The angelic expression of the faces of the saints and martyrs is very like Fra Angelico's work one has seen in Florence—the gilded background and formal arrangement of drapery further emphasizing the likeness. One of the monks invited us to visit his cell, though it

did not resemble in the least a cell of tradition, being a well-furnished, cheerful room, with no hint of asceticism, and regaled us with sweetmeats.

The clergy here, as in Russia, are divided into two classes—the monastic and the secular. The patriarchs, metropolitans, bishops, abbots and higher dignitaries of the Church are taken from the ranks of the celibate monastic clergy, who have a much better education than the others. The parochial clergy, on the other hand, are educated in seminaries or training schools, but only those who show special abilities go on to the academy, which seems to correspond with a university. Before the parochial priest can take charge of a parish, he must be married; should his wife die, he must resign his parish and either enter a monastery or retire to private life—in no case can he marry a second time. They do not cut their hair or beards after they are ordained. Many, especially the elder ones, have a most stately presence, and constantly remind me of my childish mental pictures of saints. The Archbishop of Galatz looks as if he has just stepped forth from a stained-glass window!

The second monastery we visited was more modest and the abode of nuns. Groups of them live in separate houses, gathered about a small church, the house of the Staritza (Abbess) being the largest and most comfortable, though all we visited were comfortable and most scrupulously clean. Many of the nuns are widows, who have retired to lead a pious life. The wealthier ones undertake the upkeep of a house sheltering several poorer sisters under the same roof. As far as I know, no nuns in Roumania teach or direct schools or hospitals; they devote themselves to prayer and meditation, contributing towards the general welfare of the convent by weaving, embroidering, carpet-making, knitting and making dulceatzas. In this monastery lay-sisters were operating a knitting machine—an innovation which

seemed almost startling to us at the moment ; others in a large, well-lighted common room were at their hand-loom.

The nun's dress is completely black, the head-gear consisting of a small, stiff round cap, from which falls a veil that is fastened under the chin, concealing the hair and ears—a most unbecoming arrangement, in my humble opinion.

The little church has a cluster of antique silver lamps—votive offerings—hung before the altar screen. I carefully examined the wall-paintings in the vestibule. On one side of the inside entrance door is represented Heaven ; on the other, Hell. They are the work evidently of an unskilled but earnest artisan. Hell is a gloomy place, where active black devils, with forked, curly tails, prod the sinners with long, three-pronged forks ; hammer them to the ground with great nails ; wreath them with chains and spiked iron collars—and look as if they are enjoying it ! It was realistic and convincing ! Heaven, on the other hand, is pale blue, and the blessed are reclining on pillow-like clouds adorned with flowers and playing harps. One felt that the painter had put more vigour into his representation of the lower regions ! It is naïve and crude to a degree, and B. thinks probably of respectable antiquity.

While in the church we heard a hammering—"toe-toe-toe-toe"—evenly and monotonously. It was the call to prayer. Instead of ringing the bell, except on great occasions, the hour of prayer is announced in this fashion. A nun makes the circuit of the building several times, with a long, narrow board suspended by a cord around her neck, hammering against it alternately at one end and then at the other with a wooden mallet. Madame R. decided she would like to come with her children and spend a summer here, for the nuns take families to board with them. The others were impatient to con-

tinue the route, so we said "La revedare" to the gentle Abbess, and went on our way to visit a famous poina (glade) near by.

Parting from the F.'s here, as they are to take the baths at Bălzăteshti, the de V.'s and ourselves pushed on via Târgu Oena. (Tîrg means market; many towns have this prefix, denoting that ^{anciently} they were centres for barter.) Near Târgu Oena are the famous salt-mines, where convicts are sent to work out their sentences. There is no death-penalty in Roumania, but I imagine some of the prisoners, who are there for life, regret it, as the deadly vapour from the underground shafts gradually poisons and finally kills them. I believe the largest salt deposits in Europe are here.

From Târgu Oena to Slenic we motored through a country of surpassing beauty, mounting higher and higher, the road often overhanging deep gorges as it wound along the course of the foaming river. Wreaths of diaphanous mist floated in the air, delicately veiling, then revealing, valley, forest and soaring rocky peaks. Flocks of sheep were pastured on the steep slopes, the shepherd in shaggy fur mantle leaning on his crook, a wolf-like dog crouched at his feet. Towards evening the sweet notes of a flute came faintly to our ears. It was an exquisite land of dreams. As darkness enveloped us, the haunting refrain of a wistful song came to my mind :

Good-bye, sweet day ! I cannot, cannot hold thee ;
Slowly thy perfect beauty fades away.


Slenic is a fashionable resort, second only to Sinaia, in the affections of pleasure-seekers. Hotels, well-kept parks, casino and shops offer comfort, convenience and distraction to the visitor. The R.'s were surprised to find such modern installations, and congratulated themselves on having had the forethought to bring suitable toilettes.

On the return journey our troubles began. We lost our way, got mired to the hubs, and required the assistance of oxen and good-natured peasants to haul us out. The Count had taken another route, and when we met again about noon, was visibly congratulating himself on his acumen. The Countess proposed to take Madame R. on in their car, as we had rather heavy luggage, and they disappeared in the distance, waving gaily. Our next rendezvous was Iveshti. With grim determination we four turned our attention to setting our visibly shaken vehicle to rights. This delayed us about an hour, and we gave up any hope of seeing our friends. However, as if eager to regain her reputation, "White Swan" now behaved in an exemplary manner, though careless confidence was no more in our hearts. It was almost five when we entered the interminable village, where, proposing to wash the dust from our throats with a glass of white wine, we stopped at a cabaret. We asked the baete (boy—aged fifty at least!) if another car had passed by that afternoon. "Oh yes," he said, "not fifteen minutes before—going very slowly; probably it is still in the village." Full of curiosity, we hurried on, and presently came upon the Count—no longer jaunty, no longer gay. The Countess and Madame R. were seated dejectedly on a bench outside an inn, and hailed us with relief. A crowd hid the car from view. Every one of the tires and inner tubes had burst, and so badly that mending was impossible. Unfortunately, the wheels of our car were of different dimensions; our tires were too small for his car. As a last resource, the sorry-looking pneumatics were stuffed with hay; then something went wrong with the motor. We tried to haul it along at the end of a rope. In vain—we had only power enough to crawl like agitated snails to the outskirts of the town, amid the ill-concealed jeers of the crowd.

The de V.'s dare not abandon their car, as a band of

gipsies were encamped near by. It was now nearly nine—going at our best speed we could not hope to reach home before midnight. The Countess decided that “she would never desert Micawber,” so, taking Madame R. with us, we bade the luckless Italians farewell, and left them in the middle of a field, promising to send a truck to bring them home the next day. It was a moonless, cloudy night. We were obliged to go slowly on nearing Galatz, as we had to pass long processions of oxen drawing heavily laden, unwieldy wagons, and wending their deliberate way to town in the middle of the road—the owners peacefully asleep on top of the loads. The clock was striking two when, having deposited the R.’s at their door, and almost too weary to remove our travel-stained garments, we sought our couches, with the conviction that the best part of a journey is the home-coming—especially after twenty hours on the road.

The next morning the rain came down in torrents. Our thoughts flew to our companions of yesterday, isolated in the field near Iveshti. On inquiry we found that Monsieur R., true to his promise, had procured a truck and set off to the rescue at an early hour, but it was late in the afternoon before they got home, drenched to the skin. Enormous difficulty was encountered in towing the car from the muddy field to the highway.

 Motoring in Roumania has great possibilities for the adventurous!

SEPTEMBER.

During our motor trip the political situation had been much in our thoughts, and long discussions of the outcome of the Austrian ultimatum to Servia had taken up many hours. The following week we went one day with our French friends, the R.’s, for a day’s excursion on the Danube to Măcin in the Dobrougea, a quaint town with

Turkish traditions, near Braila. On our return we had separated at the dock, as our homes are in different directions. B. and I were dressing for dinner in excellent spirits after our pleasant day. The babies were playing on the sofa in our room, and their fat little chuckles were most diverting. We could hear the orderlies in the courtyard whistling as they watered the garden. Suddenly the whistling ceased. There was a knock at the door.

"What is it?"

"Monsieur and Madame R. are in the drawing-room, and want to see you."

"What can have happened?" we asked each other. B. hastily finished his toilette and went to see them. I sent for Christine to take the babies, and joined them after a few minutes. Consternation seized me when I saw the three faces.

"What is the matter?" I cried.

Monsieur R. stepped forward, and taking my hand in his, replied:

"It is war—I leave to-night for France, and have come to ask you and your husband to watch over my wife and children when I am gone."

I turned to his wife; she was quite calm, but her face was white and strained. I could not believe it—my mind refused to grasp the horrible calamity. But alas! it was only too true! We felt in an atmosphere of unreality—as if helpless victims of a nightmare. That very night Monsieur R. left with a few compatriots via Constantinople for France, fearing if he did not hasten to join the army the Dardanelles would be closed.

At one stroke our happy community is rent with dissensions and poisoned by intrigues and suspicion. Former friends are now deadly enemies—propaganda for the Allies is mild in comparison with the activities of the Germans and Austrians. Some Roumanians want to

continue neutral; others want immediate entry into the war with the Allies. The news from the front is very discouraging, but we feel that the war cannot last long. My plans for taking the children to America have been abandoned. The future seems dark and full of uncertainty. Censored letters come very slowly, and we are torn with anxiety about our Canadian friends.

NOVEMBER.

The death of King Carol has saddened us all. He has died as truly a victim of the war as if he were actually slain on the field of battle. As a Hohenzollern, his sympathies were naturally with the Germans, and he used his influence as well as that of the Queen to keep Roumania neutral. Since he had found he could not persuade the Ministers to honour a secret treaty he had made years ago with Germany (with the honest intention of benefiting the country), he was a broken man. What a tragic end to a long life of steady endeavour! He had steered the country's course for fifty years, until it was prosperous and progressive, and now at the end he saw himself robbed of the fruits of his efforts. Since August his popularity steadily waned, for the people saw in him the obstacle to their participating in the war and regaining the sister provinces of Transylvania and the Banat from the Hungarians. B. was one of the delegates from the navy to the funeral. It was most solemn and impressive, and a flood of sympathy and affection went out to the pathetic figure of Carmen Sylva. Her life was bound up in his—with her the King was first, last and always; and the passions aroused since the war, the thought that he was in a few short months absolutely disliked after so many years of reverence and admiration, were most painful to her.

Everyone feels now that the new King, Ferdinand, will be willing to enter the war. His interests are en-



THE LATE KING CAROL WITH GO SFEAL WARTHADL.

tirely bound up with Roumania's, and Queen Marie is British through and through. Day by day my indignation grows against the sordid intrigues of the Germans and Austrians, who pay huge sums to the Press to keep the real news out of the papers, I am convinced. One sees the change from fairness to partisanship of their cause overnight. And then the current of opinion—what one actually hears and knows is at variance always to what they say it is! Even in our own private life and affairs we have had much to endure. B. cannot hide—would not if he could—his sympathy with the Allies; our house has become a centre for those who think as we do. Enemies have evidently been watching closely, and unwearied, repeated attempts have been made in underhand ways to injure us and undo any little influence we are able to exert.

What chiefly preoccupies those whose sympathies are with the Allies is their distrust of Russia. Ever since Bessarabia was torn from the Roumanians they have hated their neighbour, as only a pigmy can hate a giant. Friends say to me earnestly: "We love France; we admire England, and would be eager to go into the war at once on their side—but England is far, France is far; we will be fighting side by side with the Russians—and we do not trust them!"

DECEMBER.

Christmas once more, and how different from other years! The hospitable Youells brought the little British colony together around the table where so many happy gatherings have warmed our hearts. When the Pater raised his glass to "Absent friends" all eyes were dim—not one of us but thought of some of "ours" at the front.

B. is to command the *Elizabeta* again next year. It is very unlikely it will move from Sulina, at the mouth of the Danube, whither the orders are to proceed in April.

CHAPTER XI

JUNE-JULY 1915

PREPARATIONS FOR DEPARTURE—ON THE RIVER—LIFE IN SULINA—
ANTONIO—MARSHLANDS—A REMARKABLE CITIZEN—ISLE OF
SERPENTS—FLOATING ISLANDS—THIEVES.

SULINA, JUNE 1915.

HERE we are, bag and baggage, on the daily steamer sailing down the Danube for Sulina. B. has found us a "tiny nest" for the summer. I'm wondering already how to solve the problem of fitting our mountain of luggage into the aforesaid nest!

Going away for the summer is an upheaval which shakes the household to its very foundations. Well knowing that summer quarters never contain more than bare bedsteads, chairs and tables, it behoves the family to take thought for the rest, according to its ideas of comfort. Christine has high ideals of comfort (for herself and the babies, at any rate), and has packed diligently for a week. I was devoutly thankful this morning that the lord and master was awaiting us at the other end, for loud would have been his protestations when trunks and ungainly bundles to the number of twelve were loaded on the diminutive drays ("carutzas")—a baby-carriage, high chair and zinc bath-tub artistically crowning their respective loads. The cook has left for a holiday, and Gheorghe is to have charge of the house and busy himself with the garden; while Anita, the housemaid, and Mitru, the second orderly, are with us.

As the ship is crowded, the captain of the *Domnul Tudor* (the *Lord Tudor*) has given his cabin to the children, so that they can have their daily nap quietly. In my sheltered corner near the bow I have been scribbling letters to the family, which will have to be sent by courier, for the mails are absolutely unreliable, and I have to take every chance I can to send letters in this way. The couriers are often young naval officers, who journey back and forward between London and Bucharest and obligingly bring all sorts of luxuries, now unobtainable here, for their friends on the return journey.

The captain has just drawn my attention to Reni, a Russian town at the junction of the Pruth with the Danube. It used to be such a sleepy place—now it is a hive of activity. Sacks of flour, boxes of munitions, big bales, and stacks of odds and ends of machinery are piled mountain-high in open sheds. Powerful cranes and electric lights are placed on the docks; a small army of soldiers are paving the roads; heavy automobile trucks are lumbering about. I can hardly believe my eyes. It looks as if Russia meant business!

Now we are coming to Tulcea, with its quaint wind-mills slowly turning their wide brown wings on the hill slopes. It is such a piquant contrast to see the slender minarets side by side with the round church domes, and on each dome the cross springing triumphantly from the crescent. Through masses of greenery there are glimpses of low white houses and red-tiled roofs and high walled gardens, all softly silhouetted against the low sky. It always seems to me that earth and sky are nearer each other here than elsewhere, the outlines mellow, the most tangible things less real. I can see the winding road leading to the Monastery of Cocca through groves of fine old walnut-trees. Some of the monks are among the jostling crowd on the dock.

Tuleea is the last point of solid land in this region. On its highest hill stands the soldiers' monument, a tribute to those who fell heroically at Plevna. From the ship we can see the giant bronze soldiers leaning on their guns and gazing out over the endless marshes.

Here the Danube branches off in three directions. I hope some day we can go down the St. Gheorghe branch, which curves southward to Lake Razim. Down there are the famous caviare fisheries, and many a tiny Venice with houses built on stilts. The river's tortuous course flows past queer isolated little communities of Germans, Turks, Bulgars, Serbs, Russians, Roumanians—what you will! This district of Dobrogea is an intricate puzzle of nationalities, the refuge of the homeless, the fugitive, the victim of religious persecution. It is the shore where the last eddies of ancient invasions were stranded when the crashing, relentless tides of barbarians surged over this part of the world. Not far from Tuleea is a huge mound, under which is buried the ruins of a city founded by Trajan, "*Civitas Tropensium*," surnamed Adam Klissé by the Turks. Archæologists have found the relics of titanic struggles between the Roman Legions and the Scythian hordes in this neighbourhood. The story of the Roman triumphs is rudely carved on broken columns and friezes, fifty-four pieces of which have been matched together with loving patience, in order to reconstruct the story of the stupendous past. When B.'s monitor was there last year for target practice, the ship's doctor spent his spare time poking about with a spade. He found at least twenty old coins, silver and copper—some very ancient—and a bronze statuette, about six inches high, which we think must represent *Mercure*. With the exception of one foot missing, it is quite perfect and has an exquisite patine. I am pining to "go explores" also, but there is no chance until the war is over, as there are no regular steamers, and B.

steadfastly refuses to burn Government coal to take any ladies on excursions, and there isn't any "private" coal in these days. A friend in Galatz has a tear-vase she found herself not far from here—perfectly lovely, coloured like an opal. I have the most unchristian feelings every time I see it! But enough of these melancholy reflections!

We are turning down the Sulina branch now. It was straightened and deepened some thirty-odd years ago by the European Commission, at immense cost, and the ocean-going ships use it. The third branch, Kilia, is the boundary line between Roumania and Russia. All the passengers except ourselves got off at Tulcea. We were greatly pleased to see the chauffeur at the dock with our auto, which is being towed down the river on one of a string of barges. Barbu gravely salutes the sailors when they pass. They goodnaturedly reply—Pantazzi's American babies are known to them all! They smile to see the trick Barbu has of clasping his hands behind his back and planting his feet widely apart in the most approved nautical manner. "This is a nice ship!" he announces; then presently: "This is my ship!"

The banks at the entrance of the Sulina Canal are thickly planted with rows of willow-trees. We are now borne swiftly down this lush green alley by the strong current. Evening is coming on—a light breeze undulates the silver rushes seen in alluring vistas between the brown tree trunks. Not a house, nor man, nor beast is in sight. The frogs are the basses of a lusty chorus in which the myriad insects take the other parts. Their song pulsates in rhythm with the ship's screw.

At last we come in sight of Sulina. In all my travels I have never seen a more curious place. It consists of one street running along the right bank of the Danube for two miles—just a row of houses and shops, mostly

unpainted and weather-beaten, with a wide street in front and the docks. Close to the mouth of the canal the sand-dune widens, and there is room for three short streets and an imposing "palace" of the European Commission. Near it, like a gentle brooding spirit, is the grey Anglian church, with its open belfry, looking as if it had been wafted bodily (as in the legend of Loretto) from an English village and set down by unseen hands to grace this far-away spot, where East meets West. The children have seen their Daddy waiting on the dock in solitary state to receive us. More anon.

11 P.M.

The *Elizabeta* is moored in front of the waterworks, at the very top of the long street—almost in the country, if such a watery, undecided shore could be called "country"! A stone's-throw from it is our mansion—a fisherman's cottage with a thatched roof, the quaintest place imaginable, smelling delightfully of new boards, for it has just been completed.

The proprietor and his family are camping out in the back garden, leaving the "boyars" in entire possession of the house. There is a narrow verandah across the front, a box of a hall inside, with a cubby-hole screened off for Anita to sleep in. It's a good thing she is small, as even so she will have to curl up like a kitten to sleep on the shelf provided for her. On either side of the hall is a sizable room, the one on the right being my bedroom, where B. proudly points out the painted floor, the well-screened, curtained windows and the nice bed and dressing-table he procured for me in town; also, wonder of wonders, electric lights, run by the ship's motor! On the other side of the hall an enormous bed takes up a quarter of the nursery. Another quarter is obstructed by the plastered stove, a truly monumental structure, painted a vivid blue. On account of using

dried reeds for fuel, a large surface is essential in order to retain the heat. Christine begins to wonder where she is going to put her comforts! Barbu is fascinated by a bright carpet stretched on the wall at the side of the bed, representing two yellow lions with square green eyes, their noses almost rubbing together, and two red roses, the roses being somewhat larger than the lions! Sanitary arrangements there are none.

The "kitchen" consists of a sort of stove, built in a hole in the garden, fashioned of home-made bricks and heated by dried rushes, which are too long to enter the stove completely, so are pushed in a few inches at a time as they burn. A pile of this fuel, as high as the house, is handy. Luckily we are to "mess" with the officers on the *Elizabeta*, so I can view this curiosity with dispassionate interest.

JULY.

A few days ago I climbed to the top of the high water-tower. From there I saw through field-glasses a great network of lakes, canals and islands, with a solitary knoll of trees far away on the horizon. The grey sandy shore seemed to melt imperceptibly into the yellow sea. There is a fascination in the monotonous landscape; in the brimming silent flow of the brown river; in those limitless fields of green, enfolding a thousand hidden recesses, surging with life! Under the shimmering heat, the metallic light of these July noons, there is a stillness which makes one listen as if to the pregnant pauses of majestic orchestral music.

Our ear has made a sensation, as it is the first ever seen here. Every time it stops a crowd of youngsters, agog with curiosity, gather around it—their elders all eyes in the background. Such a motley lot: little Turkish girls in baggy trousers, Greeks with eager eyes, tow-headed Lipovans, their skin burnt brick-red by the

sun—ragged, not overly clean, half shy, half savage. They dare each other to touch the car. It is painted white—I wonder if that is why they call it a “sleigh on wheels”!

They all seem to speak Roumanian, though any child living here probably understands half a dozen languages, as the population of this land’s end is a heterogeneous collection of human odds and ends. A census has been taken on the *Elizabeta*, and every sailor can speak at least two languages—Roumanian, of course, and the other depending on where he comes from: the Hungarian, Bulgarian or Russian border. Many speak Greek, Turkish, German, Italian, French—English coming at the tail end; only two speak it, in addition to six others in one case and four in the other.

A decided pest in Sulina is the number of mongrel, mangy dogs about. The most hideous combination of disparate breeds united in these animals would be enough to render them unsympathetic, but the impression is heightened by their unhealthy condition; while their howling, yelping and snarling are irritating to the last degree. There is a S.P.C.A. in Roumania, and I cannot understand why the Society does not take measures to rid Roumanian towns of this dangerous annoyance. I know of people who have been bitten and, fearful that the dog might have been mad, have been obliged to go for several weeks to an institute in Bucharest where Pasteur’s treatments are given.

MARSHLANDS, *later*.

It is so oppressively hot that the sailors have their meals on shore near the ship’s side, where they have fixed up an arbour with willow boughs and set the long tables in its shade. When the bugle blows at noon, they file off the ship, each with a big round brown loaf under his arm, and seem to enjoy the change immensely.

Sometimes they eat messy, thick soup, made of fish, tomatoes, onions and "borteh" (a product of fermented sawdust, which gives it a sour flavour, queer, but nice). Every morning at half-past eleven a tray is brought to B. with a portion of the sailors' food, which he tastes and criticizes.

Twice a week row-boats go marketing at the villages tucked away in the inlets and return laden with vegetables, chickens, eggs and cheeses, the latter sewn in pine bark packages, which impart an appetizing aromatic taste to them.

At night the sailors build smudge-fires to drive away the mosquitoes, which are the most bloodthirsty of their kind I ever encountered—and clouds of them! We daren't poke our heads out of the *salon* before midnight when a shore wind is blowing. Enseoned within, we have gay musical evenings with the officers, one of whom has a Stradivarius violin, obtained in a romantic way through a lottery in Italy, which he plays with artistic feeling that delights us all. At other times we play cards or listen to the sailors singing "doinas"—melancholy folk-songs. On moonlight nights we walk out to the end of the breakwater and listen to the eerie sound of the deep-throated bell-buoys, ringing as they swing in the waves; or occasionally motor to the beach, where there is a tiny café for the "high life" ("hig leaf-a," as they call it) of the town, the long rows of glowing electric lights on both banks of the river giving us the momentary illusion of a carnival about to begin.

It is uncanny to be in a port where no ships are coming or going—absolute idleness. There are at least twenty freighters of different nationalities tied up, and their owners must be raging, for ships on the Mediterranean are making fortunes every trip. As no goods are arriving, the stocks in the shops diminish at an alarming rate, and prices mount with equal celerity. Merchants from Bucharest

have bought the entire stock in many shops, and only empty shelves remain. We are laying in a supply of household necessities. Everything is (or was !) 30 per cent. cheaper than up the river, as this is a free port.

Later.

Sulina used to be a nest of pirates ; desperadoes from the adjacent provinces congregated here, and bands of them sallied out on the Black Sea to look for unsuspecting mariners. One sees a head now and again in the street that only needs a red kerchief bound about it and gold circlelets in the ears to be a perfect reproduction of a free-booter of the Spanish Main.

The most remarkable citizen is a Maltese by birth, a strong, deep-chested, hawk-eyed man of seventy, who speaks a dozen languages badly. He came here as a seaman on some ship in his youth ; got off, no one knows why. Cunning, enterprising, with surpassing physical strength and endurance, he gradually gained an interest in a small ship, and went on until he has made a large fortune and owns a dry-dock and shipyard—silent since the war. His greatest source of wealth has been salvaging—hanging about disabled ships like a vulture until they were obliged to call for his help ; taking extraordinary risks in conveying cargoes in leaky tubs to Constantinople ; even hauling barges and rafts of logs across the sea with a tiny tug of which he was the captain and the crew—if one can believe the legends. Hundreds of tales are told of his exploits. Only a few years ago B. saw him at work on a burning ship, staggering from the deck with heavy boxes on his back, hurling polyglot curses at the “cowards” who would not assist him because the ship’s hold was full of nitro-glycerine. There was an explosion finally, but he escaped with two broken ribs and several burns. They say he has the devil’s luck. He is unlettered and can hardly write his name,

but has invented a calculating system of his own, and no one can cheat him of a penny. His principal pleasure and distraction is in his constant law-suits—he has dozens of claims against him in the courts, but employs the best lawyers and often wins his cases. Hair grows bushy all over his face, even sprouting from his ears, which are adorned with large hoop ear-rings. Underneath the grizzled eyebrows his black eyes glisten; his aquiline nose has surprising distinction. He wears a red bandana handkerchief knotted about his powerful neck, and a round fur cap on his head, winter and summer. His hands are as black as the ace of spades—once he boasted to me that he had not washed them for ten days! His servant, a mild-eyed Turk, follows him everywhere with dog-like devotion. I looked forward to seeing the women of his family, but was disappointed when they were pointed out to me in a shop the other day. His Greek wife and daughter wore Paris hats, diamond solitaires and high-heeled shoes. The portions of their persons between these ornaments were shapeless and nondescript.

His house, suggestive of a pirate's stronghold, has a grim oak door, with heavy locks and bolts. Sometimes he gives entertainments and serves an elaborate supper of expensive wines and weird dishes made by his own hands (horrible thought!) out of eels, serpents, seaweeds and such like ingredients. Once he made a plum-pudding for me (in July!), but even the comforting thought that it had been sterilized by four hours' boiling could not bring us to eat it!

His English has so many unexpected twists and turns, it keeps me on the qui vive. He is full of anecdotes and proverbs. In speaking of B. he told me: "Limba sa are oase" (His tongue has a bone in it)—meaning, he is incapable of telling an untruth. We never part without his having paid me a gallant compliment—the only thing he criticizes is the smallness of my family! His

views of life and the world in general are those of a cynic—dark intrigue, villainy, relentless revenge; he knows them all, yet he has been faithful to the family of an early benefactor and has been capable of quixotic actions. He has never quailed before man, beast or nature's worse convulsions. He seems an anachronism—a survival of the days of the Black Roger and walking the plank.

Later.

I was shown to-day a new way to cool water, for as no cellars can be dug and no ice is procurable since the war, one is driven to seek expedients. A shallow trench was made in the sand, right out in the sunniest spot, and bottles of water laid in it; then they were covered with several thicknesses of sacking. Soon the sacks began to dry and more water was thrown over them. After a few hours the water in the bottles was exquisitely fresh.

There is a long row of wineshops in the centre section of the street, each with a persuasive signboard in a different language. One is "PETER THE GREEK—THE OLD HOUSE AT HOME—WINE, SPIRITS, BEER, PORTER, ALE, GIN"—a most attractive place to Jack; though not seldom in Sulina's palmy days the sailor found himself in the street in the morning, after a hilarious night, his pockets inside out—and this in spite of the efforts of the police and the fact that there is a nicely equipped British Seaman's Institute not far away.

Quite near our villa (!) there is a patch of sand enclosed by a high wattle fence. As the gate was wide open, the children ran in this morning, when we were out for a walk, and on following them I saw a woman building a little house, so stayed awhile to watch. She had a mound of horrible-looking, oozy mud, from which she took handfuls and kneaded them with sand. When the mixture was the right consistency, she put lumps of it in a

rough wooden mould with six divisions, each the size and shape of a brick, first dusting the interior thoroughly with sand. Then she pressed down and levelled the contents with a flat stick. She filled three of these moulds, then reversed them and shook out her bricks, standing each carefully on end on as level a surface as she could find. She worked very quickly, and there were a hundred or so bricks already made, and on touching one I found it dry and solid. The walls of the house were nearly completed—reeds again, planted in rough cement, which was doubtlessly made also of the Danube mud and sand. Willow shoots were the woof of this basket-work, and little squares were cut out where the window-frames were to be fitted. The bricks were to cover the outside, I suppose. I asked our landlord how the roof would be made, and he told me it would be built of wood and raised when the walls were finished. I remember seeing this method employed in Japan. I think the architect and builder of the house I saw was a gipsy woman, for they are often employed in construction work, and I have frequently seen them as hod-carriers in Galatz.

AUGUST.

There is only one island in the whole Black Sea, and that is *Serpent Island* (*Insula Sarpele*), just beyond the horizon as the crow flies west from *Sulina*. The Government tug went there yesterday, and B. arranged for me to go along with *Olga D.*, who is with us for a few days. The journey took us about two hours. It was a sunny, breezy day, and we enjoyed every minute. I found out something of the history of the island from *Olga*, but wish I could come across a book, to learn more. It seems it was known to the ancient Greeks, and one can trace the foundation of a temple they built there. Many bits of interesting pottery have been found and sent to the Museum in *Bucharest*—nothing artistically important,

however. It must have been the mysterious Ultima Thule of this part of the world in the days of old. In modern times many ships were wrecked on its rocky shores before the European Commission built a great lighthouse, which is tended by seven Turks. The island belongs to the Roumanians (their only colony!), and they keep a tiny garrison of twenty soldiers there. The tug goes out twice a month to take fresh water and provisions to them all.

Presently we saw it rising high, rocky and treeless, from the clear aquamarine sea. The air is pure and invigorating—a decided contrast to Sulina, with its heat and turbid water. There are a number of tiny inlets on the lee side of the island, and to one of these we rowed, and reached the shore on a plank held in place by the soldiers, so we could pass dryshod. Then we climbed up the narrow path and went to visit the gleaming white lighthouse. The whole island is about a square mile in extent. A thick wall encloses the lighthouse and its adjoining dependencies. The seven Turks are dears. One, with a silvery beard, has lived here thirty years. It seems he was superannuated and sent back to Constantinople, but was so unhappy in the noisy haunts of man that he begged to come back. The keepers were very respectably dressed, each with an expensive display of watch-chain. They took a childlike pleasure in showing us their trim household arrangements and hearing our praises of their infinitesimal garden, gay with marigolds, delphiniums and asters. They while away their time with *parehesi* and endless cigarettes. We climbed to the top of the tower, and examined the powerful shining lens of the great lantern. Occasionally on a clear night I have seen the bright flashes of the beacon-light from Sulina. A tramp steamer wrecked ten years ago lies pitifully on its side at the bottom of a steep precipice on the north shore. All the rivets have fallen out, but the

plates are rusted together, and it was fascinating to see the streams of water pouring through thousands of tiny holes with the rise and fall of the waves.

We had luncheon on a fairy carpet of bright rock flowers and variegated mosses, and saw dozens of tiny garter snakes sunning themselves in crevices of the stone ledges. Then we hunted about for the vestiges of the Greek temple, but could see nothing really convincing. It would be delectable to pitch a tent here and remain for a month, but I suppose it would be against precedent for a woman to live on the island. Besides, "Domnul" would certainly dampen my enthusiasm for such an escapade with a gentle douche of practical considerations !

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Our landlord sent me a basket of waterlilies to-day by his small daughter, Maritza, and an invitation to go with him to see the marshes. At the appointed hour I found him waiting, dressed in holiday attire, beside his black punt, in which he had placed an armful of green rushes in the bow, as a seat for me, covering them with a big coloured handkerchief. He stood in the stern, manipulating his single oar in much the same manner as the gondoliers of Venice, and thus we glided along a narrow winding canal, crossing other intersecting "streets," called each by name as if they were city highways.

The water was as clear as crystal ; a mosaic of pretty aquatic plants floated on the placid surface. In some spots the green ferns lay so thick it seemed as though we were approaching wide lawns. Rising high above our heads on either side was the impenetrable marshy jungle, teeming with life, and vocal with a thousand tiny voices ; rustling softly—strange—mysterious ! What a display of flowers of every hue ! Pink and white waterlilies swayed gently in our wake, iridescent insects like

flashing jewels hovering above them—here a butterfly, there a splendid dragonfly, with quivering, lacy wings ! It was enchanting to see a ruby-throated humming-bird sip honey from a pale flower, a frog splash from a lily-pad. The myriad waterfowl were so tame they hardly disturbed themselves at our approach. I was hoping to see some herons, but they are only to be found farther in. Aigrets are the commonest trimming for hats here and in Tulcea, a proof that they must be plentiful. One can get a pair of wings for four dollars !

By and by we came to a floating island. My guide took the butt of his oar and with a couple of vigorous strokes drove it down through the turf to a foot's depth—the water welled up ! This *terra firma* is composed of a mass of tangled roots and vines, torn from their bed of slimy mud by some great hurricane, and now floating hither and thither at the will of the winds and currents. There are thousands of such islands of every size in these regions. It must be a wonderful sight when a tornado sweeps past, rooting up the "stufa" (rushes) in some places, submerging big tracts in others. There are innumerable wild animals—pigs, beavers, wild cats, rats—and they seem to feel the atmospheric disturbances and to realize when a storm is coming, for they flee madly, with despairing cries, seeking safety before the deluge is upon them.

Ion told me about the vast extent of the morass : how a man could easily get lost in it and starve to death ; of some great stretches where grass and clover grow, and the fishermen's families can pasture a cow, goat or a couple of sheep ; of how he goes with his comrades in the autumn to cut rushes and bring them home for winter fuel ; of the inundations and the suffering they bring ; but he loves his corner of the world, and would not exchange it for any other, no matter how fair. He makes a decent living with his nets and is a sober, home-loving man.

His wife is his untiring helper, toiling from morning till night. She must be an exceptional woman, for she has the only flower-bed in the vicinity, and even a few fruit trees. How she finds time to tend them I cannot make out. When she looks up from her tasks, or sits a moment with her baby in her arms while the samovar boils, it must rest her eyes to see the bright colours, the big butterflies and droning bees in her garden plot. She had had many children, but only two were alive—a common story, alas! Typhoid and dysentery used to take an annual toll of many lives until the fine new waterworks were installed and the water carefully filtered and oxygenated. Now these diseases are almost unknown. Malaria only gets the new-comers—the Sulinites seem immune.

The European Commission, the supreme source of Sulina's prosperity, has established a little gem of a hospital on its property, where patients are cared for by two English trained nurses, under the direction of a Roumanian doctor. I passed an enjoyable morning looking it over, not long ago, under his guidance. We don't see much of the local Commission officials, as a good many of them are Austrians and Germans, and B. gets into frightful discussions with them about the war, while I cannot manage even a decently polite exterior. There is a lot of tiresome gossip among them—they have to fill in their days somehow, I suppose. The Russian Commissioner's wife is here, at the "palace," so we dine and bridge there occasionally, and with the British Vice-Consul and his lively American wife when we feel like company.

From the tiny British and American colonies here and in Galatz and Braila we have gotten up a small fund for sending tobacco to the Tommies on the French front. Our personal contributions were in the children's names, and they have just received the nicest postcards in acknowledgment—the first ones—right from the trenches.

Later.

We had considerable excitement the last few days. In casually looking over the newspaper B. saw as an item of news that our house had been broken into and robbed. We decided to go up and see about it, and found, sure enough, that during Gheorghe's absence late one afternoon thieves had broken a window in the long glassed-in corridor (jamlík) at the back and had broken the children's wardrobe open with an axe. It must have been someone who knew the ways of the house, for Christine used to keep her money in a drawer in that wardrobe. They were disappointed, whoever they were, for she put the money in the bank before leaving. Afterwards they had been all over the house, leaving confusion in their wake, but the only thing of any importance missing was B.'s revolver, which I kept in my bedside table drawer when he was away. Evidently the thieves were looking for money, but had not had time to break open any drawers which were locked. We are hoping the police will find them, but I "hae ma doots." However, it was a warning. We have put the silver in a safety deposit vault at the bank, and are sending Mitru back, so one sailor can always be at home.

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B. has a *congé* for two weeks, and we are going for a motor trip to Sinaia—just our two selves. The children are splendidly well, and will be in charge of the entire crew of the *Elizabeta* during our absence.

CHAPTER XII

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 1915

AUTOMOBILE EXCURSION — PLOESHTI — SINAIA — PREDEAL — TÂRGO-
VISHTI — MĂNĂSTIREA DEALULUI — BUZĂU — HOUSE-PARTY AT
BALENI.

A MOTOR TRIP.

WE left Galatz early in the morning last Monday, having planned to end the first day's journey at Ploeshti, getting there about five. The national highways are in good condition, and we were getting along splendidly until lunch. It was hot and the air oppressive, and as we were going rather fast, that may have been the reason the tyres began to act badly in the afternoon, which put us late; but we were eager to push on, in spite of darkness falling. About ten the car suddenly stopped dead—rear axle broken in two! It was pitch dark, except for the two long paths of light thrown forward by the searchlights of the car. We were in the open country between Buzău and Ploeshti—as nearly as we could calculate about twenty miles from the latter. It began to rain. It wasn't a very cheerful prospect to spend the night in the car, so we hunted about for shelter.

In a few minutes we discovered a white cottage glimmering faintly not far off. Vincenzu shouted and threw stones at the fence; a dog began to bark furiously. Presently a woman's frightened voice called out to know who was there. We told her of our predicament, and asked if she could take us in. She said she was alone,

had come that day from her home to prepare the place for occupation during the fruit harvest, and had no lamp, no matches, no bedding, only planks raised on trestles to offer us. Nevertheless, we went in, groping our way, with the fitful flames of matches to guide us, carrying the cushions of the ear and our plaid, and had soon forgotten our mishaps.

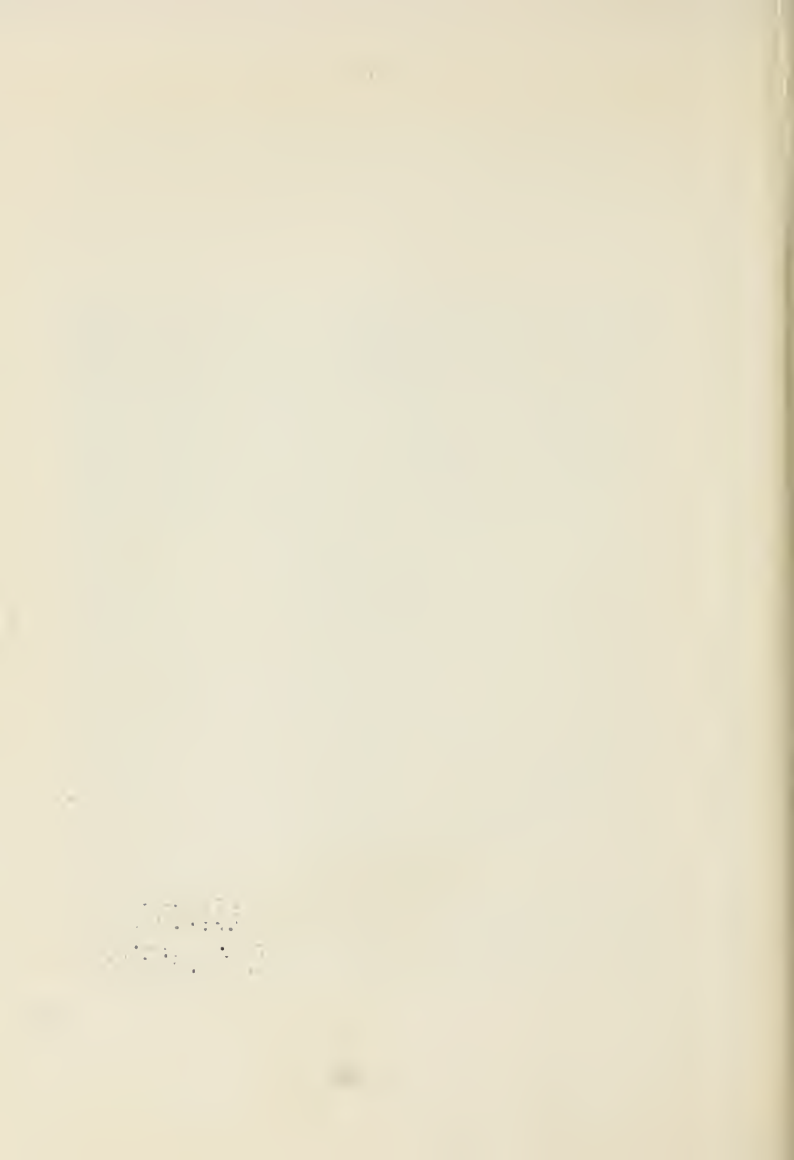
Next morning, on awakening, we found we had been sleeping in a tiny room, quite bare, except for our trestle bed. B. went outside, and after washing on the verandah from the solitary basin of the household, brought it to me full of ice-cold water from the well. After splashing about, I felt much refreshed, and soon joined him and our hostess, with whom he was chatting. She was a pleasant-looking woman of fifty, her hair tucked out of sight in a snowy "batista." She wore peasant's dress—a double embroidered red apron hanging from the waist, in straight panels back and front, over a butter muslin dress. Her bare feet were small and shapely. She was the wife of the village schoolmaster, and this plum orchard belonged to them, though they only stayed there when it was time to gather in the harvest.

I asked her how many children she had. "Eight," she replied. There was a pause. I expected to hear the usual sad tale of loss and sorrow, but she continued: "I had pity on them (*am avut mila de ea*) and cared for them well. God be thanked, they are all alive!" What that means of energy, resource and luck only one who knows the living conditions in Roumanian villages can realize, for about 60 per cent. of the babies die in their first year.

Despite B.'s unconsenting frown, I insisted that he offer her some money at parting, to pay for our night's lodging. She refused, apologizing for the lack of comfort, saying she was glad to share what she had, and seemed so hurt that I felt quite ashamed, but persuaded her



PEASANT WOMAN WITH DISTAFF



to accept a tin of sweet biscuits from our stock of provisions as a gift for her children.

In the meantime a double team of oxen had hauled our poor "White Swan" to the nearest station, Albesti, about two and a half miles farther on. Vincenzii returned with a carriage for us, and we proceeded ignominiously to catch the train.

It is a pretty, hilly country around Albesti, with vineyards and orchards thickly planted on the sunny slopes. The vines are not planted in rows and wired up, as in America, but a circle of sticks surrounds the vine root, and the shoots are tied back unto them. It looks untidy, but the results must be satisfactory, as the grapes are delicious and the wine cheap and good.

B.'s thoughts were far otherwise engaged than mine. The scenery meant nothing to him, with his precious auto in such a state. We got a flat car for it at the station, and it followed us to Ploeshti with only a few hours' delay. Once there, the patron of the repair shop promised to cast a new part and have it ready for the road again in three days. I did not mind, as Ploeshti was a novelty to me, and even B. brightened up perceptibly when he remembered that A. M., an old friend of his, lived in the town.

We lunched at the station, and a very good lunch it was too, for the station is the central one for all branch lines and has the best railway restaurant in the country. "Suppose we go on to Bucharest for the afternoon," suggested B. "It is only an hour away." No sooner said than done.

Bucharest in August belies its reputation—the streets are dull and empty; but we put in a happy afternoon in an antique shop. A unique silver spoon-holder, shaped like a basket, was the recompense for hours of bargaining—no American bustle or hurry here! We ended our day in the Hôtel Continental open-air restaurant

—dining to the music of the “*tzigane*,” whose leader is one of the characters of Bucharest. While we were discussing the pros and cons of going on to a *café chantant*, who should come up but A. M., of Ploeshti! Much surprised to hear we were temporary residents of his city, he enlivened us by saying that he intended motor-ing from there on Sunday to join his wife in Sinaia, and would take us along if our own car was not ready. The hours flew by in brisk conversation; then B. looked at his watch. We had left our bags and engaged rooms in Ploeshti, so we must return by the last train. Alack! The train at that very moment was steaming out of the station. We had to spend the night at the Continental, minus luggage, but a spring bed and a bath consoled us effectively for this second misadventure. Early in the morning B. sallied forth to get a couple of tooth-brushes, a comb and clothes-brush. The simple life!

With A. M.’s vivacious company the next two days passed quickly in Ploeshti. The walk down the shady avenue from the hotel to the station for meals was the event of the day. I was regaled with the history of each of the families living in the handsome houses *en route*. It is the fashionable quarter of the town. For the rest, Ploeshti is very much an overgrown village, with a cobble-stone paved square in the centre, where the markets are held. A couple of hotels and a few good shops surround it. In several streets are open gutters—quite clean, it is true, with streams of water rushing along them.

The hotels do not serve meals—even the morning coffee has to be carried in from a neighbouring coffee-house. They have no sitting-rooms or place to receive visitors, except the bedrooms. These are quite clean, but with dreadful German furniture and carpets—one bathroom for the whole hotel. However, this is not surprising, as the same conditions prevail in all provincial towns in Roumania.

Ploeshti is near the oil wells, and for that reason one sees a number of Americans in the streets from the Standard Oil Company's settlement. It seems they have a model village and farm and make themselves very comfortable. Their open-handed, good-natured ways have made them popular with the whole country-side.

The "patron" kept his word, and the car was ready on Sunday morning. B. handed tips around, and we were off with A. M. along the national highway to Sinaia. Wonderful weather, excellent roads and good company made the day a memorable one. First we crossed an undulating plain bristling with oil derricks; a long line of oil tanks were standing on the railway tracks near by. Then we wound our way through many picturesque villages. The houses in these mountain districts are generally better built and more neatly kept than those on the plains. The peasants were enjoying themselves out of doors—their Sunday attire was gay and attractively varied. Our route took us over bridges across stony-bedded streams, winding higher and higher, with delightful vistas opening out at every turn. The forest, with its giant pine-trees, the limpid brooks, the prairies dotted with flowers, enchanted me.

Sinaia is *the* mountain resort of Roumania, and one of the loveliest spots on the eastern slope of the Carpathians. The King has his summer home here, and all the world and his wife join the fashionable throng in the hotels or live in one of the many villas. Riding, tennis, and above all the Casino offer plenty of distraction to the visitors. August is the most crowded time of year, but we succeeded in getting a room in a Swiss chalet, while A. M. joined his wife at the Palace Hotel. We were lucky in the weather—there was sunshine every day, and that is the exception, not the rule, at this altitude in this season.

The King and the Royal Family are very accessible

during their stay in Sinaia. King Ferdinand can be seen any morning strolling along the paths of the open park, a black spaniel his only companion. What perplexing problems must weigh upon his mind in these difficult days! The Queen is fond of riding and picnics, and is constantly to be met, always ready with a spontaneous smile, gracious and beautiful. Like her uncle, King Edward VII, she never forgets anyone who has been presented to her. She is artistic in her tastes, makes charming water-colour sketches of flowers, writes books and has striking and original ideas in dress and interior decoration. She is often photographed with Madonna lilies, and loves to have them about her; in fact, there is a distinct personality expressed in everything appertaining to her. Here in Sinaia, one of her favourite spots is a platform she has had built in a giant oak-tree, and where she often invites a favoured friend to tea in her "cuibul" (nest), as it is called.

The young Princesses, Elizabeta and Marie Mignon, are both fair-haired, blue-eyed, with fair complexions like their mother. Elizabeta has a classic profile and is dreamy and thoughtful. Marie Mignon is full of gaiety and laughter, as eager for dancing and fun as any girl of her age.

Castelul Pelesh, their home, is an imposing grey pile, rather bizarre in the complexity of its architecture, set in a wide sweep of velvet lawns; behind, the steep mountain-side, clothed with century-old trees, their green branches contrasting sharply with the red-tiled roof of the palace; in front, the foaming Pelesh, immortalized by Carmen Sylva, and a valley of fairy-like loveliness, fit haunt for the elves and pixies of Roumanian folk-lore.

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One evening we went to the Casino, a glaringly new building, with a theatre, where we saw a French comedy well presented. Afterwards we went on to the rooms, where *chemin de fer*, baccarat and *petits chevaux* were in progress. A throng surrounded the tables, where very large sums are lost and won every day. As it bores me to play, I had leisure to look around, while chatting with friends in the intervals of the game. There was a host of smartly dressed women with fine jewels and impeccable Paris frocks. The short skirts reveal their dainty feet; they have the reputation, the Bucurestoise, of being the best shod women in Europe. The shoemakers are artists—their patronesses more exacting. The men were of widely varied types—many of them foreigners, for the Diplomatic Corps summers at Sinaia—and all passionately absorbed in the play. Games of chance make an irresistible appeal to the Roumanians, and Monte Carlo is the Mecca of the care-free, pleasure-loving element of the rich. Lottery tickets are eagerly bought by all classes. One of the advertisements for lottery tickets amuses me always. It says: "Schoder's Luck is Colossal"—but doesn't specify whether for himself or his clients!

An agreeable feature of this Casino was the absence of the shabby crowd which so often elbows the *élégantes* at Monte Carlo and similar resorts. Everyone was of the same world, and nearly all acquainted, which gave a decidedly informal air to the assembly. About midnight B. came to find me with his modest winnings. We decided to go home, but A. M. was not to be persuaded to accompany us; he remained to the "wee sma'" hours, losing fifteen thousand lei. The next morning we hastened to a fascinating shop, full of peasant pottery and wood-carving, and spent a thrilling morning buying a quantity of quaint things with *our* winnings!

PREDEAL.

In the intervals of dining and lunching with hospitable friends we motored over to Predeal—about an hour's ride. The railway station is the centre of attraction, spies and counter-spies being at work there, and under-hand bargains for wheat and cattle concluded. We went into the restaurant and drank a glass of tea, curious to see the crowd; and a more unprepossessing lot it would be difficult to find—shady-looking individuals from various countries—a sort of national rag-bag! Heaven knows what trafficking goes on, what plots are hatched in this border station!

For the rest, Predeal is a continuation of Sinaia—full of pretty villas. The valley opens out and the mountain-sides are more rugged, the wider vistas making, some think, the views lovelier than elsewhere in the neighbourhood. Another afternoon we went to Azuga to see the glass factory, but were disappointed to find it closed.

Later.

A charming spot in Sinaia is the monastery church overlooking the valley of the Pelesh, recently restored by one of the Cantacuzene family. An ideal retreat for a life of repose and contemplation, the interior is adorned with brilliant mosaics, while the stone-flagged courtyard is graced with rows of oil and wine jars of the same type as found at Pompeii. We spent an interesting hour there on Queen Marie's festival, when all the treasures were displayed.

TĂRGOVISHTI.

We were sorry when the last morning came, but sad experience prompted us to have a margin of time to our credit. Madame A. M. filled my arms with bright flowers at parting.

We took the road to Tărgovishti, so passed by a different

route on the return journey. The country was wilder, villages farther apart. We went over several low wooden bridges, so frail we thought every second they would break. Passing through one of the villages we caught sight of an attractive "scoartza" (a woollen wall-hanging, intended to be stretched beside a bed or couch) hanging over a fence. We stopped and found it really pretty—bright blue background, with yellow and red woollen embroidery, in good design, and after lively bargaining, carried it off in great glee. By two o'clock we had reached the plains. Near Tărgoviști we came to a narrow road, on which were spread unbroken stones to remake it. For a considerable distance only a narrow strip of smooth road was left at the side. As we were proceeding carefully along it, trembling for our precious tyres, we came face to face with an empty cart, drawn by a small horse, with the usual sketchy rope harness. The driver seemed to be dozing on his high seat, his *eachula* (fur cap) pulled down over his eyes.

"Hi!" (look out), cried Vincenzo. "Please make way for us!"

We could only go into the gutter or on the stones. No reply. He stopped the car. Two or three passing peasants gazed interestedly at the car and cart opposite each other. The horse stopped, the driver looked up.

"Get out of the way! Don't you see my tyres will be ruined if I go on the stones?" No reply, no movement. Domnul was getting irritated by this time, "Bulgarian that you are, will you let me pass at once, or will you have me throw you and your horse into the gutter?" he called out heatedly. The words seemed to penetrate; the driver slowly turned his cart on to the stony side of the road. The onlookers chuckled. "Right you are, Excellency. Bulgar he is, and of our village," was their comment. "What made you think he was a Bulgar?" I asked. "None of ours would be so pig-

headed," was B.'s complacent reply, as he distributed cigarettes among his compatriots, and we were off again.

Târgovishti was the capital of Roumania in the sixteenth century, but a round stone tower is the only vestige of its ancient glories. To-day it is a quiet provincial town, dozing in the sun among the wide, rich cornfields.

We were sharp-set after our long drive, and the *apéritif*, a thimbleful of ice-cold *tzwica*, and some black Greek olives were most acceptable refreshments, while the host of the unpretentious restaurant put a clean cloth for us and carefully wiped off the cutlery and glasses.

Lunch over, we made a short detour to visit Mănstirea Dealului. The approach to this historic spot is through a long avenue of chestnut-trees, the branches of which meet overhead to form a shady archway, reminding us of the stately avenues at Versailles. Then the road winds up the back of a steep hill. Facing Târgovishti, the incline is so abrupt it looks like a stone wall. At the summit there was a fortress in the olden days, an eagle's eyrie, the castle of Mahai Bravul, the Great Stephen, who united all the Roumanian provinces under his beneficent sway for a short, glorious period. Of his kingdom only two provinces are free to-day—Moldavia and Wallachia.

Of the original fortress the church alone remains in the central courtyard of the new military school—a brilliant white edifice, with red roof, open colonnades and rounded archway silhouetted against the blue sky. The grey Byzantine church, moss-mottled and crumbling with age, seemed to shrink with its modest cupola and portico into the deep, clear-cut shadow always cast over it by the surrounding walls of the school. In the dim chill interior the skull of the great prince is reverently preserved, lying on a pedestal, enclosed in a stone

reliquary which is pierced with round holes. Through them one can see the famous relic distinctly—just a small, brown skull, all that is left of such valour, power and glory. I laid my armful of flaming gladioli on the pedestal; then we went out again into the warmth and sunshine. “Doamna este Americana” (The lady is an American) I heard Vincenzo remark to the guard as they followed us, apparently in explanation of my gesture.

Four hours later we arrived in Buzău. It was restful, sitting at a round table on the pavement in front of the hotel and listening to the splashing of the fountain in the pretty square before the town-hall. Buzău has the usual straight, wide streets, lined with one-story stuccoed houses. Most of them have two windows on the street line, and the entrance facing a paved courtyard at the side. They looked like so many cardboard boxes, with square holes cut in the sides, by the moonlight that evening. The chimneys are so short that they are frequently entirely hidden by the cornice around the flat roof.

The absence of factories and coal renders Roumanian towns clean and the air pure. There is plenty of space; every home has a yard with a few shrubs, or at the least a tub of oleander before the door. Acacia, chestnut and linden trees break the monotonous sameness of the architectural lines and perfume the air in the spring and summer with their scented blossoms.

GALATZ, SEPTEMBER.

It was hard to tear ourselves from Sulina and the *Elizabeta*—the children are lost without their playmates and the petting of the sailors. The last day there was a regatta of paper boats—an ingenious, flag-bedecked fleet was launched on the Danube, a farewell frolic Barbu will never forget; the only sad part was the fleet not

returning to port. He was looking back all the way home in the hope of seeing it.

OCTOBER.

This month an invitation came from Princess Cantacuzene to a house party, which Queen Marie would honour with her presence. My name had been sent on the list of proposed guests, and Her Majesty had graciously signified her consent to my being asked. On this occasion I realized as never before what abounding energy and strength the Queen possesses. She is absolutely untiring, and can support any fatigue or exertion with buoyancy. She possesses a magnetic power of inspiring enthusiasm and sympathy in all those who come in contact with her—a wonderful gift always, but especially to be admired in days like these. She satisfies every ideal of what the first lady of the land should be—the very embodiment of beauty and romance.

In the afternoon we drove over to the vineyards in a long procession of open carriages. I remained in mine, chatting with my companions, while the Queen, our hosts, the young Princesses and some others wandered about picking whatever bunches of grapes pleased their fancy. The vines were laden with sweet, ripe fruit. Princess Elizabeta brought our quartet an assortment to try. It was pleasantly informal. Afterwards we went on to a very civilized “forest,” returning home with our conveyances decorated with crimson and yellow autumn leaves. In the evening *jeux d’esprit* were the diversion. The park was illuminated with Chinese lanterns; spirited tzigane music made one’s toes tingle. Princess Marie Mignon practised some of the new dances with her young friends, her mother looking on indulgently, and laughing heartily when the enthusiasts got out of step.

I have never seen the country in our district (for Băleni

is in Covurlui) looking as lovely as it did coming through it this time, not even when the wild peonies carpet the meadows with magenta and emerald in June. The autumn is undoubtedly the ideal season of the year in Roumania, often lasting, as it did last year, until the middle of December.

CHAPTER XIII

NOVEMBER 1915-AUGUST 1916

CONDITIONS OF NURSING AND HOSPITALS—ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE—
DEATH OF CARMEN SYLVA—REMOVAL TO BUCHAREST—CAMPUL
LUNG AGAIN.

NOVEMBER 1915.

WE live in the midst of alarms, war and rumours of war our daily preoccupation. The Red Cross is working feverishly to collect materials for the hospitals, ready for Roumania's entry in the war, which we are more and more sure every day will not be long delayed.

My heart aches, for I know the unpreparedness of the hospitals. No properly trained nurses exist, and in caring for the wounded, zeal and devotion can never replace skill. Everything in the hospitals is inadequate and antiquated, and, except the operating-rooms, far below any modern standard. To me it is inexplicable the prejudice there is here against women earning their living, especially against nursing as a profession. When the wealthy need operations or treatments, they rush off to Switzerland; they are not in the least aroused to the duty of providing modern equipments in the hospitals at home. How can anyone expect good results from nursing by ignorant low-class women, earning eight dollars a month? That is what they are paid at the Elizabeta Doamna hospital. Tuberculosis is so common that the disease is habitually referred to as "it." Every family nearly in country districts has one

member in the grip of the white plague. Once, in conversation with Queen Elizabeta, I told her that if I had the means and opportunity I would like to found a training school for nurses.¹ She sighed and spoke of the obstacles she had encountered in her efforts to advance the country towards modern ideals in this respect, and the discouragements with which she had met. In Bucharest she opened a nursing home with German Catholic sisters some years ago, but the scope of work is extremely limited, and no Roumanians are connected with it.

B. is to remain in Sulina for the winter with the *Elizabeta*. I have been several times to see him there since my return home, going down with one or another of the Danube Commissioners' families on the *Carolus Primus*. B. is spending his spare time on board in translating Watson's new book, *Roumania and the Great War*. He hopes to get Jorga to publish it, as it is a masterly piece of work by one who understands the complicated questions of the Near East. Under the *nom de plume* of "Scotus Viator," Seton Watson has had a great influence on the English Press for years.

The Alliance Française, of which Hélène Vacaresco is the moving spirit, has organized a series of lectures by leading French authors. We have already had two—Henri Bordeaux and Lichtenberger, both men of eminent talents. It was an unusual experience to be in the packed auditorium to hear the lectures given in a language foreign to all but a dozen of those present, and to know that the most delicate niceness of phrasing and accent was noted and appreciated by everyone. It gives those who are pro-Ally an outlet for their sym-

¹ This wish was realized when in November 1920 a unit of eight Canadian nurses went to Bucharest to train Roumanian women in their profession.

pathies, and the audience bursts into prolonged enthusiastic applause when given the slightest opportunity.

I have another personal, though sad, satisfaction, and that is that strangers even stop me on the street to tell me that they have read the *communiqués* about the Canadian soldiers, and congratulate me on the bravery of my countrymen. They know what Canada is now! My hand trembles in opening every letter, fearing as I do to learn of some irreparable loss.

JANUARY 1916.

One gets accustomed to any life. It seems now that there has never been anything else in the world but war. Yet we managed to put all care aside at Bâleni, where we spent the holiday season—a fairy-like Christmas-tree delighting children and grown-ups alike. My most charming Christmas surprise was a photograph of Queen Elizabeta sent through M. Dall'Orso. We had a few days in Bueharest at New Year (old style), as B. was called there for some important interviews concerning his future post.

APRIL.

B.'s new appointment as Director of the Navy means our moving to Bueharest. I am both glad and sorry—glad for him to have such an interesting place, and sorry to leave the friends here, for we have had such a congenial circle during seven all too short years.

Queen Elizabeta's death was not a great surprise to me. B. received orders to go to Bueharest as one of four officers chosen from the army as guard of honour for the lying-in-state. Christine and I covered the gold lace decorations and epaulettes of the *grande tenue* with crape—even the sword-knot was swathed in black. There is universal sorrow, for noble, gifted Carmen Sylva's life was one long benediction for the poor and suffering.

Her sun was set when the King died, and I think she had no wish to live.

MAY.

After two visits to Bucharest, we decided on an apartment in a central though quiet neighbourhood—General Shaguna's house. There are only two apartments in it—the General and his wife live downstairs, and we will have the second floor. Rents are more than double there than what they are here. We are fortunate really to have stayed in one place so long, as some army officers have not remained a full year in one post since I have known them.

BUCHAREST, JUNE.

The moving proved too strenuous for me, and I have been through rather a bad time. Dear Mrs. Youell's kindness is what brought me through. What I would have done without her I cannot imagine. The furniture was packed and B. already in Bucharest at his post, trying to get things settled for our arrival, when I was suddenly taken ill. The Youells took me and the children to their house, and were, as always, goodness itself. When I was convalescent, I used to lie on a sofa near a window opening upon the garden—roses everywhere, a purple mist of iris in the distance, Barbu and Sybilica chasing birds too tame to be frightened, everything quiet and peaceful! At night, a nightingale sang always from the same tree. If one could only have forgotten the war!

Now we are settled in our new home, and find ourselves very well satisfied with our choice. We brought all our Galatz domestics with us, so they do not feel lonely. The General had promised to put in electric lighting in place of gas, which we have at present, but has had to postpone doing so as no wires are procurable. We are feeling shortages—window-glass, china, dress materials,

stockings, thread are more and more expensive every day. B. has just been off on the Danube again, with the new King this time. He says it was far from restful this year—continual coming and going of Ministers and Missions. Our entry into the war cannot be long delayed now. I fear greatly that Roumania will not be in a position to help effectively, and may prove a chain about the Allies' feet. Everyone seems optimistic, but when I think of the hospitals my heart is oppressed. One must hope for the best.

CAMPUL LUNG, JULY.

The heat was so great that B. decided to send us here. It is such a relief to be away from city streets. We have a little furnished house, set in a pine grove on a hillside. The children are delighted with the chickens and pigs, and have adopted a pet lamb, which of course (!) is adorned with a red bow and eats out of their hands. B. comes up over the week-end, as it is only about a five-hour journey from Bucharest. Finding it impossible to get new tyres for the car, we have not brought it, and even were it here it would be of little use, as the area for excursions is very circumscribed. We are in a military zone near the frontier, and many roads are barred. It startles one rather in rambling among quiet lanes to see machine guns among the hayricks. It is like turning the leaves of a fascinating picture book, in one's walks abroad, to meet groups of bare-footed women, maramas wound about their heads, their brightly embroidered dresses sometimes falling in straight, severe lines to the ankles, sometimes with flaring or kilted skirts, or, prettiest of all, with fringes swinging from yokes about the hips. They spin as they walk with proud, graceful carriage, or carry quaint baskets full of fruit to market. They must be industrious in this district, for several times I have passed cottages the whole front

walls of which were wreathed with strings of empty spools—proof of the hundreds of yards of embroidery worked by the inmates. My wedding gown and long silver veil were made by "Ilie," a designer of local fame.

The great event has been the visit of the new Queen. She is going about the country to distribute, personally, the bounty left by the late King Carol in his will. As "pomana" for the poor, a certain portion of the money has been allotted to each district, and is given to deserving aged men and women chosen by the mayor. It was a touching scene, picturesquely framed in the shady square. One felt a witness of an hour in the days of yore, as each poor man or woman offered a tiny nosegay to the royal benefactress before receiving the crisp bank-note she handed him, the supply of money being constantly renewed by an attendant. Though Her Majesty has been doing the same thing almost every day for weeks, there was no weariness or impatience in her manner, only kindly compassion.

STRADA ALEXANDRU LAHOVARU, AUGUST 22ND.

When B. came to Campul Lung for the week-end, he was so sure that our entry into the war is only a matter of days that he would not leave us behind, so we all came down together. I was loath to leave that charming spot, but wanted to know the latest news each day. Military Missions are here from England, France and Russia pressing for an immediate decision.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 27TH.

B. went over to have a chat with the Admiral this afternoon. Just as I was taking my solitary cup of tea, Princess Cantacuzene came in on her way home from the races. I felt the electricity in the air as she entered—she was tense with excitement, her eyes shining. "It's

all right," she cried, "we're going in—and," embracing me, "on the right side!"

"War is declared, then?"

"Yes, just a few minutes ago I learned the decision of the Council of Ministers. They say the King was splendid. Some of the Ministers held out to the very end against the Allies, but in vain!"

In ten minutes B. came with the evening papers—printed in huge head-lines. He could hardly contain himself with joy. I feel like some of the soldiers with whom I talked in Campul Lung. They had been mobilized continuously since 1913, and when I asked them if they wanted Roumania to go into the war, they replied, "Yes! No matter what happens, to finish, once and for all with this maddening uncertainty. Then, too, we want to help our Transylvanian brothers"—"Fratii de Dinecolo"—brothers from "over there," as they so touchingly call them.

PART II

SHADOW

*In our forests are such green pines,
In our fields such silken grass,
So many butterflies flutter in the sun . . .
But in the house—— Alas !*

ROUMANIAN SONG.

CHAPTER I

AUGUST-NOVEMBER 1916

DECLARATION OF WAR—AIR-RAIDS—HOUSE STRUCK BY BOMBS—
NEWS FROM THE FRONT—GERMAN TREACHERY—FLIGHT—
DESCRIPTION OF JOURNEY.

AUGUST 1916.

WAR was declared at five o'clock on the afternoon of the 27th. At nine o'clock we went out for a stroll about the streets to see the demonstrations taking place. In the few hours since four till darkness the street lamps had been painted blue, so that one could hardly see to walk, but in the Calea Victoria there were bands of University students before the Palace singing patriotic songs. The sidewalks were thronged so that the crowd overflowed into the road and carriages could not pass. About midnight we heard the church bells ringing. This was the signal of alarm of an air-raid. I thought that it could not be possible that a Zeppelin should be there so quickly. On rising and pulling back the curtain we immediately heard a whistle from the street below, which was the warning from a policeman to put out the lights or draw the curtains. Five minutes later a tremendous explosion filled our house with dust and smoke: the first bomb had carried down a corner of the third house from our own. We could hear the spattering of the shot from the anti-aircraft guns as it fell like hail on our roof. Five bombs were thrown that night.

Everyone's nerves are decidedly upset by the present

state of affairs. The aged General and his wife, downstairs, are seriously thinking of going out into the country. They say this is not a healthy spot, with the British Legation in the same street, and Také Jonesco, whose name is anathema to the Boches, only a stone's-throw from us. My health is not sufficiently normal for me to attempt any work in the hospitals. It is maddening not to be able to lend a hand. B. is the busiest of mortals these days. He has been straining at the leash, as it were, for so long that he has superabundant energy in reserve for this crisis.

SEPTEMBER.

The news from the front has been marvellously good so far. If one can trust the *communiqués*, the army is advancing more rapidly in Transylvania than it did in Bulgaria, 1913.

We have had some bad moments with the acroplanes. In the first daylight raid people were so curious to see the planes that in spite of warnings they stayed out in the street gazing up at the sky, and when the bombs fell, four hundred were killed or wounded. B. saw the lamentable procession being taken to the hospitals—children and women principally, broken and bleeding. The planes fly very low—they have no fear of the guns here, evidently.

The children have become so accustomed already to the raids that when Barbu hears the church bells, he says at once: "Time to go down to the dark!" Everyone rushes to the cellar, where sometimes we stay a couple of hours. It is especially harrowing at meal times, as the dinner or lunch is left to burn or boil over while the cook is cowering in the darkest corner she can find in the cellar. Anyone can come in for shelter, and a strange assemblage of people is often in ours.

The Zeppelin (for I have never heard of more than

one coming at a time) is a less frequent visitor than the Taubes, which generally arrive in groups of six from the direction of the Danube—that is, from Bulgaria. I find the night raids more insupportable than those in the daytime, as it is horrid to be wakened from sleep and assemble the members of the household, carrying the children with us wrapped in blankets. Little Sybil goes to sleep again, quite satisfied when she finds herself in familiar arms, especially the sailors', to whom she is devoted. The first raid made my teeth chatter and knees shake—but B. reasoned with me. I see shivering doesn't help any—"What is written is written." I hope none of the news of these raids is known at home!

B.'s promotion to full Commander at any other moment would have filled us with pleasurable excitement. As it is, we had hardly a thrill!

SEPTEMBER 28TH.

Yesterday morning about eight o'clock I heard the church bells ringing. Being exceedingly tired from watching the night before during a Zeppelin raid, I wanted to close my eyes and forget that such things as aeroplanes existed, but second considerations made me rise, and hastily slipping on a dressing-gown, I went to the nursery. While earnestly engaged in persuading Christine and the children that there was absolutely no danger, only a great deal of noise, in the space of a few seconds eleven bombs were thrown, and burst very near our house. The effect was like a triple earthquake; all the windows fell in, the glass splintered to atoms. A few seconds later I heard an agonized voice crying: "My mistress, where are you?" On my replying, it continued: "Do not move from where you are, for glass is coming down like rain in the corridors." It was the orderly, Mitru, who on the first alarm had descended into the cellar where all the household had remained

during the raid. On returning to my bedroom I was quite convinced that second thoughts were best, on seeing the confused mass of broken glass and splintered wood which littered everything. My very hasty toilet was made in full view of the excited first-comers of a crowd of sightseers, who entered the house quite easily, as the doors were sprung and the house had a decided list. Near the house, where the largest bomb had struck a cobble-stone pavement, there was a hole big enough to hold the street car which had almost fallen into it. The old General was hit in the ankle by a piece of flying shrapnel and his cook's little son had his arm severely cut. Four were killed in front of the doorway. My neighbour had her ankle broken; the milk-woman's horse standing at the side entrance was struck dead—loud were his mistress's lamentations! The auto was standing in the courtyard, ready to go and bring B. home to breakfast, for he had been working all night at his office. When the bombs fell one of them dropped into the next garden and sent pieces of stone and wood from the fence hurtling through the air with terrific speed. The body of the car was punched with a dozen holes, the leather seats cut in ribbons, but the motor escaped intact. One is more or less superstitious in a country like this, and we are impressed by the fact that on the bonnet protecting the motor was fastened a silver medal with St. Christopher's image on it, and a little prayer for the patron saint of travellers to guard it from harm.

Of course it was impossible to remain in the house, with the wind blowing freely through it. The dust shaken from the ceilings and walls is thick on the floor and rugs, the woodwork and furniture chipped and scratched by the flying glass; the chandeliers are shaken to pieces—not a globe is intact; the curtains in ribbons. Curiously enough, very little china was broken. M. Stefanescu, a former Galatziote and an old friend, was at



COMMANDER PANTAZZI IN HIS CAR AFTER THE BOMBARDMENT

the house half an hour after the disaster, and insisted on our going to his home. We were expecting A. M., of Ploesti, to lunch—he was somewhat surprised at the appearance of the house!

OCTOBER.

Clearing away the débris and boarding up the windows took quite a week. We had a prolonged discussion with our landlord as to who should replace the windows. The price of window-glass is prohibitive, and the General very naturally did not wish to put in new windows, which might be smashed by the next air-raid. We felt the same, and in addition that it is not our house, but at last we compromised, each paying half. The air-raids are less frequent lately, perhaps because some French airmen have arrived and go up at once when the Taubes are signalled. Every day peasants drive in from the country with carts piled high with vegetables, which they hawk from house to house. We are purchasing a goodly store, as the winter is sure to be a difficult one. The navy has distributed a considerable quantity of rice, sugar and flour to the officers, with the warning that no more will be available until spring. We have a supply of wood laid in, so feel easy on that score.

The news from the front is increasingly alarming. The wounded are crowding into the hospitals by hundreds, and the Germans are concentrating their bombing efforts on the stations and their vicinity. Several houses and hotels have been requisitioned for the Germans who are interned. No one can doubt, however, that numerous spies are at large and working actively for our enemy.

In case the worst comes, I packed two large trunks with silver and various other valuables, and B. took an opportunity to send them to Jassy a week ago. The defeat of the Roumanians at Turtukaia was a frightful slaughter. Alas, as I feared, the long-range guns of the Germans mowed down our poor men like grass.

Yesterday I visited one of the temporary hospitals with Madame B. to see her son, who was wounded in Transylvania. Poor boy, he is only twenty-one, a second-lieutenant, and looks so white and languid. He told me that his wound was nothing. "What dispirits me," he said, "is the memory of the look in the men's eyes when they saw our firing was ineffective. They turned to me and asked: 'Why aren't our guns like theirs?'" The Roumanians have no experience in the new warfare—they cannot be beaten in hand-to-hand encounters—but this way of fighting an unseen enemy demoralizes them. A friend of B.'s, who was sent as a messenger to the Commander-in-Chief at Turtukaia, told me that the Russians had done absolutely nothing in the way of preparing to hold the front. The Roumanian reinforcements, when brought up, had to dig shallow trenches under a hail of bullets. When panic seized the troops, they fled to the Danube for safety. All the ships our naval people could get together were rushed to the spot to help get them away. Terror had made them uncontrollable; they crowded on to a floating dock in such numbers that it sank underneath the weight; the despairing cry as they sank in the swift current could be heard for miles.

We look every day in the papers with agonized hope to see if Serrail is moving from Salonica. He should be doing so by now, according to the agreement.

I am obliged to continue my medical treatments daily, though my doctor is exhausted with his hospital work, and I have often difficulty in returning home on account of the air-raids. We dare not let the children out of the garden.

A few days ago B. and I were lunching with the Admiral. Just as we were leaving, an air-raid was announced, so we decided not to venture out. A number of passers-by sought refuge in the house, among them Mr. Andrews,



ADMIRAL URSANO'S HOME IN RICHMOND, VA.

of the American Legation, who told me of his recent experience at the German Legation. The day after the departure of Von Busche and his crew, a Roumanian gardener, employed by the Germans, came to the Prefet of Police and informed him that the previous night he had buried some boxes in the Legation garden under the direction of his employers. The Prefet invited Mr. Andrews and a member of the Swiss Legation to witness the unearthing of the cases. They were discovered at the places indicated, and when opened were found to contain a number of hermetically sealed vials, with instructions in German as to their use—for poisoning cattle, wells and other like uses. Analysis at the laboratory proved the contents to be the most deadly poison. Mr. Andrews finds it a bit difficult to preserve a neutral state of mind under the circumstances, but, in duty bound, seems to be making a loyal try for it!

A number of people are leaving Bucharest, afraid it will soon fall into the hands of the Germans. We are among the optimists, and are hoping still for the best. Jassy will be in all probability the headquarters of the Government, in case of flight. We feel secure with the auto to leave in, in the event of needing an absolutely last resource, and keep the tank well filled with gasoline, economizing tyres, obtained from the Government supply on account of B. having given over the use of the car to the Naval Department.

Our friends are vying with each other in patriotic self-sacrifices and generosity. M. Chrissoveloni has headed a subscription list for field ambulances with half a million lei, and others are giving their houses for hospitals and convalescent homes.

I feel as if I am moving in a dream—everything seems so unreal, so uncertain, the future is so full of vague terrors. One thing I am irrevocably decided upon—I will not remain in Bucharest under German rule. Many

women are going to stay on, no matter what happens, feeling surer of comfort and well-being in their own homes than in flying to "evils they know not of."

Later.

It seems incredible, but one hears on every side that the Germans have dropped poisoned bon-bons in the streets, and some children have eaten them and died of the effects. It is certain that several deaths lately are directly due to the fright of the bombs.

Friends from Galatz tell us life is much more normal there. Madame R. is anxious for me to take her house, as she wants to leave for France with her three children, but I hesitate to be separated from B. in such times as these.

Another tragedy has been added to the many which have already befallen us. The death of bonnie little Princee Mireea was a shock to everyone. Friends who are near the Queen daily tell me she works at the hospital unceasingly, with feverish energy—trying to forget her grief in caring for the wounded. The King, the most devoted and indulgent of fathers, is overwhelmed with this new affliction.

JASSY, NOVEMBER 30TH.

The panic in Bucharest since I last jotted down any details in my note-book was indescribable. On the evening of the 26th B. and I went to see the Urseanos, who had been obliged to abandon their house on account of lack of fuel, and were at the Athenée Palace Hotel. What an evening it was—a hubbub of excitement, contradictory rumours, agitated comings and goings! The French Mission had been quartered there for several days, but it was too late for anything to be done. When we said good-night to the Admiral, we expected to see him again the next day. When shall we meet again

now? B. obstinately refused to listen to my forebodings—he believes firmly in Roumania's "star." Alas! I fear it has disappeared behind a cloud for the present. On the morning of the 27th he went early to his office. At ten I heard his step in the hall; coming out of the library, I met him on the door-sill. At the sight of him suspense was at an end—I knew the worst was true.

"We can no longer delay," he said. "Pack all you can until four this afternoon. The auto truck belonging to our Department will call for what you have ready; do not detain the men—they must go to the others. We have our places on the Ministry of War train, leaving some time to-night. I may not return until evening. I've arranged for our car to take us to the station. Take plenty of food for the children on the journey."

He was gone in an instant—the sword of Damocles had fallen!

In five minutes Mitru and Gheorghe were rolling up the rugs, the cook was diligently filling a case with kitchen utensils, Christine and I piling on the dining-room table the blankets and linens we had decided long ago to take, if need be. Our greatest treasure was a hundred and fifty cans of tinned vegetables, meat and fruit, carefully hoarded since the spring. I marvel now at our silence and concentration. At four promptly the truck arrived. A small army of sailors ran up the stairs, and without more ado began carrying downstairs the boxes and bundles, of which we had fourteen ready. I glanced wildly about me. In that one look I saw my dear souvenirs of friends in Canada—pictures, books, beloved Chinese treasures, our nice brasses, the monumental samovar! I realized that nothing more could go, but I was so relieved at the thought that we were going ourselves that at that moment I regretted nothing.

Leaning over the balcony rail, I watched the sailors loading the truck. A lady standing on the pavement

approached the sergeant hesitatingly. I heard her ask him if he could not take a small trunk for her to the station for Jassy. He glanced up to me; I nodded, recognizing her as a neighbour in the apartment house opposite. Two sailors accompanied her, and in a few seconds reappeared with the trunk.

The General and Madame Saguna came up—we were quite uncertain of anything except that we were alive that moment. I wished we could take them with us. At seven B. came in, exhausted. He could hardly speak—had eaten nothing since morning, when his breakfast consisted of a black coffee and a rusk. He was agreeably surprised to hear that I had been able to get away twelve trunks and the rugs, as well as the children's folding cribs. The children were wild with excitement at the promise of going in the auto, for, of course, they had not been in it for weeks. I had prepared B.'s valises for him to pack himself, and urged him to begin when he had eaten something. Then he told me he could not accompany us. He had been to the station, and seeing the disorganization there, had offered his services until the last possible moment. I was so overwhelmed I could say nothing. My first impulse was to remove my hat and remain also; the second, to accept the situation without waste of time or emotion. Our remaining would only be a drag on him; by himself he will certainly be able to make good his escape. We had already arranged with the cook to stay on (she is Transylvanian, an Austrian subject), and confided all the keys to her, so there was someone to look after his creature comforts. Vincenzo was to leave with the car and the two orderlies and make his way to Jassy, if possible. All other considerations in my mind were now pushed into the background—the impatience to be gone burned in me like a fever. About nine o'clock we left the house. Not being sure whether the train would leave from the central station or the

suburban, we went through the darkened, silent streets to the latter. A scene of confusion was there. Lighted by smoky torches or dim lanterns, a whole army of men were loading freight cars with miscellaneous goods and chattels—swearing, pushing, working like demons, all of them! After half an hour's rushing hither and thither, B. returned to us to say he had found out definitely that our train would leave from the main station. He had also ascertained that our baggage was safely in a car ready to leave.

On nearing the station we found crowds of carriages, motors and pedestrians hurrying towards it. Mitru, who had accompanied us, standing on the running board, began to unload our valises, provisions and rugs. B. took Barbu in one arm, my dressing-bag in his free hand. I carried Sybilica; Christine and Mitru followed with the rest of the luggage. Vincenzo remained with the car. "Have no fear, Madame; I will bring the auto safely to Jassy," he assured me. Shadowy gloom enveloped us in the station corridors. One constantly stepped on a foot or hand of the crowd of would-be refugees sleeping on the cement floor. Some remnants of their household belongings tied in a sheet served them for a pillow. B. said that the poor wretches had been there, some of them, for days, trying to board the evacuating trains, and in their frenzied attempts to get places many had been injured and little children crushed to death.

When we had groped our way to the main waiting-room, Mitru put the valises on the floor near the door. Some one unwittingly kicked over a bottle of boiled water I had prepared for the children to drink; it broke, soaking one of my feet to the ankle. The room was crowded with apathetic women and children. A convent of French nuns, quiet and resigned, occupied one corner. Barbu began to cry when he found the precious bottle

was broken. One of the kind sisters, on seeing his distress, came over to speak to him, and effectually distracted his attention by offering him a large piece of chocolate; thus depriving herself, no doubt, of a ration of food which should have lasted her until safety was reached.

B. disappeared with Mitru in the darkness. Christine and I seated ourselves on our valises, each with a child on our knees, and waited with what patience we could summon up for their return. Muffled sounds of turmoil, shunting of trains, squeaking of wheels, cries, curses, shuffling of myriad feet came to our ears.

When B. returned in an hour's time, he told me that he had met a number of naval officers on the platform, who were coming to help us get on the train, which he had located with difficulty. He glanced at the children, then asked me if it would not be better to return home and wait to try again the next day. I felt I could not take the risk—perhaps to-morrow would be too late. Our friends came to our assistance and we entered the *mêlée*. Keeping compactly together, we were able to approach the train. It was in complete darkness, about a quarter of a mile from the waiting-room. Mitru and two other sailors were fighting off a clamouring crowd at the entrance of our car, crying: "Naval car—Reserved—No place!" Already one naval officer's family were inside. As we passed our bags high overhead, these friends seized them through the windows. Then, bracing ourselves, the children held as high as possible by the two strongest and tallest of the party, the others shoving fiercely, we got to the steps and so on to the train. Hardly were we aboard than it suddenly started. Mitru's reassuring voice called out: "I think the train is only shunting!"—which proved right. After two or three convulsive jerks backward and forward it stood still. B. was beside the window when we stopped, greatly agitated.

"We have made a mistake. You must get off—this train is not leaving until some time to-morrow," he cried. And so it proved. We had to descend, and with renewed efforts get on the right train. Our car was a sleeper, with a corridor, as is usual on this continent. I stood on the back platform and seized the valises over the rail. Such a pile was hastily thrown in that I was presently buried to the waist, and could not stir from the spot. The car was brightly lighted inside, which was a relief—we could see what was going on. When the valises were cleared away, one was missing and a rug had disappeared. I struggled through the crowd to the compartment where Christine had already tucked the children to bed. Mitru stood outside the door, and when anyone attempted to enter, he said that the two children were ill with a terrible infection. We were left in peace. I leaned out of the window. B. was still there. He told me Commander Mihail, of the Naval Department, was on the train and would look after us; to go to the rooms reserved for the Naval Department at Jassy; that he would surely make good his escape in plenty of time. Knowing how *débrouillard* he is, I am confident he will.

Madame Mihail was in the neighbouring compartment, where ten were packed like sardines, five sitting along the lower couch and five dangling their feet from the upper. Her husband, our protector, was in another car. Exhausted by the emotions and hard work of the day, I lay down beside Sybilica. My mind was a blank, my head throbbed, my back ached. Christine lay on the upper berth; I could see the tense rigidity of her body. The children slept.

At dawn we were astir—the train was moving at a snail's pace; as it rounded long curves, we could see it was interminably long. Two aeroplanes accompanied us, flying low, ready to defend us should the Taubes

approach. We settled our luggage comfortably, and propped up the children on the upper berth with all the pillows, while we tidied ourselves and prepared the morning coffee on our spirit lamp. Madame Mihail joined us—dark circles under her pretty eyes. After we had breakfasted, she was glad to lie down for a while. The corridor was so packed, one could not stir in it. I asked a tired-looking, middle-aged woman to sit down in our compartment, while Barbu and I stood in her place to look out of the window.

The long day dragged on—night came; we stopped at every wayside station. At Vasului a number of people got off the train. At midnight we arrived at Jassy, the journey having taken twenty-three hours from the time we got on the train, though the actual time in motion was about seventeen. Commander Mihail joined us; with him was a family of four—M. and Madame Golesco and their two children. Madame turned out to be the neighbour whose trunk was taken to the station with ours. We had the agreeable surprise to find the sergeant who was in charge of our collective luggage; he was a qucer-looking figure, with two of B.'s civilian overcoats over his uniform. It was biting cold and damp on the platform, after the overheated train. It was impossible to enter a waiting-room—all were jammed to the doors. The Commander told me that the rooms reserved for the Naval Headquarters were crowded with soldiers, who had come by an earlier train; it was impossible for us to go there. Madame Golesco had an uncle who, fearing things would come to this pass, had rented a house in Jassy. We might go there. She had never been in Jassy before, and did not know the address, or if the uncle were there or not. Madame Mihail volunteered to accompany her to the house of a mutual acquaintance, who, it was hoped, might be able to give the address, and they set off on foot. The Commander

was taken up with arrangements about the luggage, chiefly preoccupied as to the safe transportation of the chests of naval archives to the new Headquarters. Christine and I stoically camped out on our valises and held the sleeping children in our arms. M. Goleseo brought glasses of hot tea to us, which he had procured from the restaurant after an heroic struggle.

An hour later the Commander came up, smiling, to say he had procured a Red Cross ambulance, for word had been sent him by a policeman that the ladies had found the house and were waiting now for us to join them with the valises. We climbed in, the Goleseos too, and after a long drive through brilliantly lighted streets, which surprised us after Bucharest's gloom, we got to our destination. The uncle had not yet come to Jassy, and the proprietor of the house did not feel in the least inclined to take in a horde of strangers. His heart softened, however, when he saw the children. He and his wife prepared a room where Christine, myself and the children are sleeping in a single bed, two with our feet at the bottom, two with our feet to the top. Madame Goleseo and her little Ghita are beside us, and Madame Mihail on the sofa. This is the fourth day as our refugee life. We laughed ruefully the first day in examining our bags—Madame Goleseo has one brush and comb for the entire family; Madame Mihail has six pieces of soap, but only one nightgown. We go a two-mile walk to a restaurant for meals, and sometimes have to stand two hours waiting for a table. The proprietor of the house has allowed his cook to prepare the children's food, as Christine, with admirable forethought, has a bag with everything necessary for a week's food, even a package of potatoes and carrots. The sky is lowering; it rains at intervals. The streets are disgustingly muddy and crowded with dejected pedestrians.

I got a list of rooms to rent, and spend hours trying

to find some place in which to live. The prices are either prohibitive (as much as two thousand lei a month for three rooms), or else the rooms are utterly unsuitable. The Jassy people seem to resent our coming. Being near Russia, they dislike and fear the Russians, and felt from the first we would get no help from them. I suppose it is disagreeable to have one's privacy invaded, but surely they ought to have imagination enough to realize that it is more than unpleasant to have had to abandon comfortable homes and be thrown on the good will of strangers. Coming along the street this morning I met Nieu (B.'s half-brother) unexpectedly. He was on his way to the Naval Department to find out where I was. He brought me a note from B. to say that he had learned we were all right by a code telegram from Commander Mihail, and that he would join us in a couple of days.

Things are going from bad to worse at the front.

CHAPTER II

DECEMBER 1916-MARCH 1917

CONDITIONS IN JASSY—B. SENT TO RUSSIA—REPORTS OF EVENTS
THERE—SOME PERSONAL EXPERIENCES.

STRADA SFTA. SAVA, JASSY, DECEMBER.

WHEN B. arrived five days later (after a much more comfortable journey than ours, by the way) he was able to requisition two rooms for us in the Jewish quarter of the town, the family to whom it belongs moving to the lower part of the house. As there is only one bathroom, baths are rare luxuries. Laundrying is a vexed problem to solve; all the little niceties of life are things of the past. A housemaid of ours in Galatz, who had married, has come to us for refuge—her husband is at the front. In the frame outhouse seven are sleeping—Vincenzio's father and two brothers in addition to himself, two orderlies and Alexandrina's husband. We share our food with them, and in return they are assiduous in rendering any service they can—such as sawing wood, standing for hours in line to buy provisions, walking four miles daily for the children's pint of milk, and searching for fresh eggs or cheese from the peasants in the neighbouring villages.

Luckily the car got here safely. St. Christopher was evidently again watching over it, for few other autos have arrived. B. and I go for every meal to M. Braiesco's (Madame Goleseo's uncle). We have pooled our resources,

each one contributing what he has saved of cutlery, table-linen, etc., as well as sharing the cost of the food; and from fifteen to twenty people lunch and dine at their table every day. It is a felicitous arrangement, as it keeps up one's spirits to be with others—misery loves company!

The Germans are still far from Bacau, where the Braiescos' home is, and occasionally their steward can send a cartload of turkeys, chickens, vegetables, etc., since the roads have frozen. When these arrive, outsiders are invited to share the feast. Nicu comes occasionally and plays for us, so for a moment one forgets—but only for a moment!

Later.

With the exception of the children, we have all had to submit to inoculation against cholera and typhoid. Madame Braiesco and I had very bad arms, and everyone felt miserable for a few days. Jassy before the war was a quiet university town of seventy thousand; now the population is over a million. No wonder starvation and disease are rife. In addition to the civil population, Russian troops are passing through Jassy by thousands. They are in fine uniforms and good boots, lead stout, well-fed horses and sing as they march. Some are encamped near Sfta. Sava, and have cows with them and plenty of food—not so our people. The other day as I came up the main street I saw a shadowy figure of a man leaning against a fence; even as I looked he slid to the ground. A couple of passing men stooped over him. "Saraeu (poor thing)—starved to death!" The crowd came between us—I saw no more.

Unreasoning fear of spotted fever (typhus) has me in its grip. It is carried by fleas, and no one can escape being bitten in Jassy. The infected insects were brought here by the Mongolian trench-diggers who came with

the Russian troops. About 1 per cent. of those infected ever recover. Five of the sailors in B.'s office have died of it this month.

It is the coldest winter known for fifty years. Many times since the first shocking sight I have seen poor unfortunates sink down upon the snow in the broad daylight—never to rise again! It is common to see old men, dragging their feet wrapped in sacking padded with straw over the icy pavements, search (very often in vain) for crusts and bones thrown away by someone more fortunate than they. It is despairing to be surrounded with such suffering without the means of alleviating it. What a sordid thing is this unvarnished struggle for existence!

FEBRUARY 1917.

Just after New Year's Day B. was appointed member of a Commission to go to Southern Russia (Odessa, Kherson, etc.) to investigate the conditions there and advise as to the suitability of certain localities as a refuge for the King, Government and Ministerial Departments. Things are going so badly at the front that it was urgently necessary for the Commissioners to start as soon as possible. They have been gone nearly a month, during which time we have had absolutely no news of them.

MARCH 1ST.

B. returned to-day, laden with good things, and has glowing tales to tell of the comfort and plenty in Southern Russia, though he interrupts himself every few minutes of his narrative with the remark: "But the prices are appalling!" It seems like a dream that so near this "city of dreadful night" there should be such luxury and cleanliness as he describes. The Commission reports Kherson as being the most suitable place for the retreat, if our country has to be abandoned, which seems every day more likely.

As Commissioner from the War Office, one of B.'s preoccupations during the voyage was to see for what reason the supplies sent by the British and French via Archangel for our army were coming through so slowly. All along the route of his journey he saw great piles of munitions and provisions lying apparently neglected by the Russians, which closer examination revealed to be destined for Roumania. The gross carelessness of the Russian officials is reprehensible—one carload of supplies a day on an average is coming from Odessa; but then their whole conduct towards Roumania is inexplicable. I remember all the doubts expressed about them before Roumania went into the war. From Galatz friends write me that when the first Russian regiments were announced to arrive there, the chief of police ordered all the wine in the city to be poured into the gutters, because such lurid reports had reached his ears of the conduct of the Russian troops, long deprived of vodka, on their crossing the Roumanian border, where wine is abundant. Some of the Galatziotes resisted and delayed; the last barrels were flowing in rivulets down the sides of the streets when the Russian vanguard entered the town. When they saw the red streams, the soldiers broke from their ranks with a mighty shout, and throwing themselves flat on their stomachs, they lapped up the wine with their tongues, or scooped it up in their caps or hands. The price of eau de Cologne has risen to two hundred lei a bottle, because they swallow it wholesale. Many of them have been taken to the hospital suffering from the effects of drinking furniture polish, wood alcohol or filtered benzine. They put a piece of cotton wool over a tumbler and let the benzine filter through slowly, then drink it off!

To return to B.'s account of the trip through Russia, a rich Russian family, Falzfein by name, offered their magnificent country seat to the King as a place of refuge,

and the Commission visited it to find out if the locality were suitable. To their regret, they had to report unfavourably, as it is in an isolated district and awkward to reach from any railway station. They think that Odessa itself would be better.

I saw the King to-day walking along the street with a single A.D.C. I could not help but admire his simplicity of bearing—his serene face. He certainly withstands "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" with stoical dignity. One Sunday a couple of weeks ago I went to the cathedral, an edifice of historical interest, to attend a solemn service of intercession, to which the Queen came in her Red Cross uniform. I was standing near the door as she entered, so saw her face to face. She seemed to me the symbolic victim of all the horror and suffering of these dark days—her eyes were so sombre, her face so drawn and tired; I had to turn aside to hide my sudden tears, though I had promised myself not to give way to such childishness. Tears are so foolish, so useless, before this weight of world-wide tragedy!

MARCH 10TH.

After reading B.'s report on the transport situation, M. Bratiano (the Prime Minister) sent for him and asked him to go and reorganize that vitally important branch of the service in Southern Russia. We will leave just as soon as we can. B. is eager to begin his new work, and I to leave this plague-stricken spot. Already we have begun preparations. Many of our friends are even now settled in Odessa, where B.'s headquarters will be. I shall see the de Visarts, too, as the Count is Consul for Italy there.

I expect we shall have a difficult journey, but nothing matters if we can only get away from here.

MARCH 13TH.

We are to leave to-night. The passports have been a bother, but we finally have them in hand. Another naval family have taken our rooms, and will move in at once when we are gone.

CHAPTER III

MARCH-APRIL 1917

JOURNEY TO ODESSA—ARRIVAL—FIRST IMPRESSIONS.

PORT OF ODESSA, MARCH 16TH.

ARRIVING at Odessa after a dreadful journey, we drove down to the port, where the *Principele Mircea*, a Roumanian passenger boat from the Danube, was lying at anchor. The captain hospitably offered us shelter until we could find an apartment. Returning, B. found us at breakfast—the children lively after a good rest. Several droshkies were hailed; we got in, two by two. Constantin piled the baggage, big and small, on a cart. We started, B.'s droshky leading—his "harem" following down the broad, straight Pushkinskaiya. Odessa seemed so clean, so airy, so handsome, that I felt like singing a song of thanksgiving right there in the street. As we came in sight of the sea, the sun shone brightly. There was the *Mircea*, familiar and comfortable. I had been present when it was launched in 1913. There were friends, kind faces, plenty of soap and water—rest after our nightmare journey!

To-day, rested, unpacked, comfortably settled on board, the world seems like a different place. When we were promenading on the deck this morning in the sunlight, watching the hundreds of gulls flying about and breathing the clean, bracing air, Barbu said to me, *à propos* of nothing, "Why was it always dark in Jassy?"

The port is crammed with ships, though there is complete immobility. The Roumanians have nearly all their merchant marine here, the King's yacht, *Stefan-cel-Mare*, is moored next to us. The *Sinope*, a fine Russian warship, is anchored inside the mole. The Russian sailors seem giants in comparison with the Roumanians.

Odessa was planned by engineers under the direction of Catherine the Great, before any buildings were erected on the site (formerly a Turkish hamlet) chosen for the city, with the result that the streets are wide and straight and the cross-roads at exact right angles. The city ends on the seafront in a fine tree-planted boulevard overlooking the port, which is two hundred feet below the abrupt steep escarpment. A wide flight of stone steps leads down to the port, which can also be reached by a toy-like funicular. The population, much augmented since the war, must number at least a million at present.

The buildings were designed for the most part by Italian architects, and the finest of them resemble the palaces of Venice. Even the most humble has a marble staircase, the material having been brought from Carrara by sea. Many of the apartment houses occupy a large area, and though seldom more than four stories high, numbers of them contain a hundred apartments. There are very few private homes. Passing in the streets one has glimpses of pleasant interior courtyards neatly arranged, usually with a fountain in the middle. The principal entrances are about twelve feet across and barred by an iron grill, so that to enter one must ring. The porter (*dvornik*) appears, and, opening a small door in the middle of this ornamental fence, admits one to the courtyard. The *dvorniks* know everyone's business and play an important part in the lives of the people occupying the apartments. In the houses of the rich, in addition to the *dvornik*, there is a gorgeously liveried servant in attendance at the foot of the main staircase.



MADAME PANTAZZI AND HER CHILDREN IN ODESSA

He is known as a "Swiss"—probably the first men employed in this capacity were of that nationality.

The numerous squares are adorned with statues and monuments, the largest square being that of the cathedral (Sobor) in the principal business section. The Alexander Park, at the eastern extremity of the city, is many acres in extent and a favourite rendezvous on Sundays and holidays. Beyond it follow three suburbs with handsome residences set in gardens facing the sea, the resort of the wealthy in hot weather, Bolehoie Fontana (Great Fountain) being the most important of them.

The Countess escorted us yesterday to a lending library from which one can borrow French, German and English books. The majority of the collection is German, though the French books are numerous and representative. The English authors are rather out of date—Charlotte Yonge, etc. Oscar Wilde's works are evidently the most popular—the edition is almost in rags, the reason being that on account of the purity of his diction Wilde is recommended by English teachers to their pupils. The library will be a great resource, as we have very few books with us.

The de Visarts have a pleasant circle of acquaintances, and promise us that life in Odessa will soon change the course of our thoughts, so deeply tinged with melancholy by our experiences during the last six months.

ELIZABETINSKAIYA, APRIL 10TH.

After three weeks of searching we found these comfortable quarters in a quiet neighbourhood, not far from the Sobor. The apartment belongs to a widow, Madame Sophie, and her daughter. We have three of the six rooms and share the kitchen and bathroom with them. We give her what would be more than sufficient rent for the entire apartment in peace-time—250 roubles a month—and we supply our own bedding, silver and the

fuel for cooking as well. Madame Sophie and her daughter never sit down to a regular meal, but seem to be taking snacks at all hours, and apparently never go to bed! Though with no pretensions to culture, they both speak German and French, and Sonia understands English as well. By gifts of sugar I have won their hearts, as they are both exceedingly fond of sweet things. In order to economize the precious store, they place a lump between the teeth and slowly suck a whole glass of tea through it. I noticed the Russians in the train doing the same thing.

To turn from our personal affairs to the great world, the Sunday after our arrival in Odessa we heard the first news of the Revolution, but it was received with incredulity, and for several days everything went on normally. We could not foretell what Odessa would decide to do. Then General Marx, who is in command of the troops in this section, threw his lot in with the Revolutionaries. Coming up from the port about noon nearly a fortnight ago, invited to a luncheon in town, I met an acquaintance, who told me that a demonstration in favour of the Revolution was taking place. He accompanied me to a place of vantage, and we saw the orderly procession, several thousand strong, passing the statue of Catherine the Great. The soldiers, each decorated with a knot of red somewhere about his person, were in neat uniforms, their horses well groomed, with accoutrements shining. The houses were decorated with flags and Turkish carpets hung over the balconies. The citizens crowded the streets; university students, men and girls, joined hands and danced along beside the troops, cheering and singing patriotic songs. After a short speech by the General the troops dispersed quietly, and the rest of the momentous day was a holiday.

We hope, the German influences at the Russian Court being destroyed, the Russians will now go forward whole-

heartedly with the Allies, and Roumania will have a much better chance. The officers with whom B. is working are continuing in their pre-revolutionary posts, and seem eager and anxious to co-operate loyally with our Mission. Ten trains a day are leaving for Jassy, and great quantities of munitions and provisions are piling up in Odessa warehouses. A great deal of my time is employed in shopping for friends in Jassy and making up and sending parcels by dispatch carriers.

Through the de Visarts we have met a number of hospitable Russian families. I blush for my ignorance of Russian life, and am steeping myself in translations of Russian authors and finding much pleasure and profit therein. Every Tuesday evening we go to the Maszewskis', who throw open their magnificent apartment to the Consular circle and their friends. M. and Madame Maszewski are old residents in Odessa; Monsieur is of Polish origin, his wife is Swiss. They are childless, elderly people, whose chief pleasure is giving pleasure to others, and in this they remind me of the Dall'Orsos in Galatz, of happy memory.

B. is getting along so well with Russian. All I can do so far is to recognize the letters of the alphabet and mentally pronounce them. My chief difficulty is with the "R's" and "P's," as in Russian the former is pronounced "P" and the latter "R." The habit of years protests every time—I can't persuade myself that "P" is really "R"!

CHAPTER IV

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 1917

DEVELOPMENTS OF THE REVOLUTION—BATTLE OF MĂRĂȘESHTI—
PROSPECT OF LEAVING FOR AMERICA—SOCIAL LIFE.

NICOLIEVSKAIYA BOULEVARD, AUGUST.

LAST month the de Visarts had the offer of a palatial house about half a mile from the station on the Pushkinskaiya, on condition that they would occupy it as the Consulate; for the proprietress, the widow of an Italian shipbuilder, M. Anatra, fears that otherwise her treasured collection of pictures and statues will suffer from the Revolutionaries. They decided to accept, and this gave us the opportunity of taking over their apartment. We moved in when they left, and now feel very grand to have a real *salon* once more, instead of the bed-sitting-room with which we had to content ourselves since leaving Bucharest. The flat is on the ground floor, with seven large rooms and good servants' quarters. We are charmed with the lovely views from the windows—the sea in front, the Duma at cross corners, and the beautiful opera house and its park at the side.

We have rented the absolutely necessary furniture from a friend of Madame Sophie, who has relet her rooms at an even higher price than she got from us. She got us a cook, too, who prepares the food very tastily, but who is quite the laziest person I ever knew.

She never rises until nine o'clock, and goes out in a velvet gown every afternoon at four for a couple of hours, so that we are thankful to have Mitru with us again. He wrote such pitiful letters from Jassy, where he was taken ill after we left, that B. sent for him. He is a host in himself, and can turn his hand to anything.

The weather is perfect, and I am enjoying the sea-bathing. Every afternoon the de Visarts call for me and we go down to the port, where we usually find Mr. Ray, the American Consul—a Texan, and a much travelled man, whose unaffected manners and directness of speech have made him very popular among his colleagues. A rowboat awaits us at the dock and takes us to where the *Jeanne* is moored. She is an Italian passenger steamer, caught at the Roumanian seaport of Constantza in 1914, and later sent on here for safety, with several hundred citizens on board, who thus escaped the German-Bulgarian sacking of the town. The crew has been paid off and only the captain and three sailors remain on board. We use the cabins as dressing-rooms and go down a ladder slung against the mole into the sea. Near the *Jeanne* the *Carolus* is anchored, with the Roumanian and Russian Commissioners' families living on board. After the refreshing bath we frequently call on them and exchange news—there is lots of it and all different.

The children drive with Christine every morning to Langeron Beach, about a mile out of town, where they can play in the sand. Christine is shocked at the laxity of the Russians, who dispense entirely with bathing-suits, though there is mixed bathing. I wonder if it is a development of the Revolution.

Things are going sadly on the Roumanian front. A house in Odessa has been definitely procured for the Royal Family.

More Roumanians are arriving daily to swell our already large colony, and rejoicing in comfort and safety. Most of the Senators and Members of Parliament are here, among them the celebrated pro-Ally Také Jonesco. Another who is well known, Dr. Angelesco, is preparing to leave for America, as chief of a Mission. He talked with B. the other day and asked him if he would like to go as naval member of the group he proposed to take. LIKE!!!

B. is exceedingly occupied—the work of the Mission has grown and branched out in all directions. He laughed ruefully the other day to find himself confronted with the intricacies of a contract for millions of horseshoes. Occasionally in the evenings we go to Fresinnet's or Robinya's, the two smart confectioners of the town, where one sees the newly rich, in plumes and silks, consuming ices and enjoying themselves boisterously, apparently forgetful of war, revolution or anything except the present moment's satisfaction in seeing and being seen.

Auctions in the streets are of almost daily occurrence, women for the most part being the auctioneers. Mounted on automobile seats, adorned with red hats, they wave the articles donated in the air—brooms, pails, sieves, boots—and make much applauded speeches, after which the passers-by begin a lively bidding for the article in question. This is for the benefit of the Revolution. Every day is tag-day, too. One is absolutely bullied into taking tags for every object under the sun. One of Madame Sophie's friends had a tag so forcibly thrust on her breast that she was badly pricked; the pin was infected, and a serious operation was necessary to save her life.

An alarming development of the advanced revolutionary ideas is attracting attention lately in Odessa. Owing to intrigues of German spies, a great number

of simple-minded Russian soldiers have left the trenches, persuaded by fraternizing with the enemy that the millennium is at hand and universal peace about to be declared. Also, the peasant soldiers, profoundly attached to the land-men of the glebe, are afraid that if they are not at home when the new system of land division comes into force they will not get their fair share. By night they steal from their posts—at first only a few, but now by hundreds, nay thousands, they are deserting. As they have no idea of direction or distance, they start to walk to their homes. On the way they become hungry, weary. Sometimes they force their way on the trains—form themselves in bands. When refused food and shelter by farmers, they shoot and pillage, degenerating into bestial plunderers. The owners of estates are crowding into Odessa for fear of their lives, abandoning their homes and goods to the mob. Many are trying to dispose of their jewels and other valuables, and at the confectioners and restaurants brokers are chaffering from morning till night over the price of diamonds, lace, antique shawls and other precious articles of small bulk.

We hear of Kerensky, who at first was Minister of Justice after the Revolution was declared, as now the most influential man in Petrograd. He is going about among the soldiers at the front exhorting them to fight on with the Allies, and appears to be meeting with success, though it must be a superhuman task to stem such a tide of desertion.

The Roumanian troops so far seem to be very little affected by this disloyalty to the Allies among their comrades in arms; but what can one hope without proper support and more supplies than they are getting? A small number of discontented soldiers, members of the Socialist Party before the war, most of them Jews or of Bulgarian origin (i.e. from the part of Dobroudja

ceded to Roumania in 1913), have deserted and are in Odessa, advertising themselves loudly, and a thorn in the side of our colony. They hope to infiltrate revolutionary ideas into Roumania.

The committees of soldiers and workmen, known as Soviets, seem to be gaining power in every department. B. finds the Russian Generals with whom he has to consult about the munitions and transports more hesitating and undecided than at first. They have not as sure control of the underlings in their different services as they had. Vexatious delays and erratic reversals of decisions are ominous, and are making his task increasingly difficult.

We hear a great deal about the Bolshevik party. They are a group of extremists of the Duma in Petrograd. It seems that the word "Bolsh" means big or great, and that the party who wish to do away absolutely with the private ownership of property and have the most far-reaching changes in the social system take place at once—especially to fight no longer—have taken this name. As far as we can learn, it is mostly the uneducated and violent reactionaries who favour their ideas. We have heard that Russians exiled or self-exiled to America years ago have returned to Petrograd and (surely as secret agents of the Germans!) are carrying on an active propaganda for Bolshevism.

SEPTEMBER.

The news of the battle of Mărășeshti was slow in reaching us. The arrival of train-load after train-load of wounded Roumanian soldiers has brought the details of the frightful struggle before us vividly now. The Roumanians had entrenched themselves across the narrowest part of the kingdom, determined to defend the last part of their homeland with all their remaining strength. Reorganized as the army had been by

General Berthelot and his staff of energetic French officers, they awaited the enemy.

Mackensen, who took Bucharest, attacked in full force about two weeks ago. It must have been a surprise to him to find such resistance. The battle waged for eleven days and nights. Finally the Germans were driven back—their first decisive defeat on Roumanian soil. Afterwards, when the stretcher-bearers went on the field of battle to search for the wounded, they found many of the Roumanian soldiers standing upright, their guns tightly clasped in their hands, though death had claimed them, supported by the piles of their slain comrades behind them. When they had seen the Germans retreating, their old battle instinct of fighting breast to breast had been aroused, and they leapt from the trenches, running forward, bayonets fixed, and pursued the foe. Many Germans had been strangled to death in the fierce embrace of the Penesh Cureanului (turkey-feather wearers), the Roumanian infantry regiments, who have preserved the traditions of their forefathers at Plevna. We are very thankful for the victory. General Grigoresco, who commanded our army, has covered himself with glory, but we ask ourselves anxiously what there is to be done with this complicated Russian situation. Without more supplies, more guns, more munitions, the Roumanians cannot go on.

B. almost weeps with rage over the delays, agonizing for our Government, which the Russians are putting in the way.

OCTOBER.

It is depressing to see how the Bolshevik doctrines are spreading insidiously in the hospitals, where the Roumanian soldiers are convalescing from their wounds at Mărăsești. Lately in a procession (there are two a week at least) I saw that numbers of them, bandaged and on crutches, were marching together with a rabble

of valid men at their head, bearing a banner on which was written: "Death to King Ferdinand!"—"Down with the Officers!"

Mr. Ray often comes to view the processions from our windows—we are as in a front box at the opera—and translates the Russian mottoes for us. The banners are enormous and weird, with pictures painted on them representing fat angels breaking the chains in pieces; skulls and cross-bones; blacksmiths, represented life-size, smashing crowns with hammers about five times the size of the crowns; and so on. The largest, most imposing procession took hours to pass last Sunday. It was organized to register a protest against those who had killed the venerable Archbishop at Petrograd. He was recently murdered at the very altar in his own cathedral. The priests in bright robes, each carrying a venerated icon, surrounded the stately Metropolitan of Odessa. They wound their way slowly from the Sobor, stopping at the principal churches until they made a circuit of the city. They were followed by an immense crowd, mostly women, singing hymns. All was done in orderly fashion.

Later.

Dr. Angelesco has left for Washington. B. is nominated as member of the Mission, and is to follow him when financial and diplomatic arrangements are completed. It will be a godsend to us to leave Russia. B. is absolutely worn out, and many of his fellow-officers are ill from the result of overwork, nervous strain and insufficient diet. I feel the journey will have grave difficulties, even dangers, but we are facing them here too; and once out of Russia there is home, comfort, reunion with those whom I have not seen for years. Then we feel that we can be of real service to Roumania in America.

Knowing we can only take hand baggage with us, I am selling the clothes we won't need on the journey. It is rather amusing—I am deluged with applications and getting wonderful prices. We are planning to go by the Trans-Siberian route to Vladivostock. General Vivesco, who is to take B.'s post, is arriving in November. He will be initiated into the workings of the Mission, which will take about a month, so by Christmas-time we can leave.

Later.

I have been going quite regularly to the Anglican Church and enjoy the services and meeting with the members of the English and American colonies. The Chaplain, the Rev. Courtier Forster, is much interested in Russia and the Russians, and anxiously following the events of the Revolution. Another interesting person I have met is Princess Marie Wolkonski, a Russian of French origin, to whom I am much attracted. A very accomplished woman, an authoress and artist, she is a refugee here from Volhynia, with her husband and children, and has taken a house on the far side of the Alexander Park, where she has drawn about her a charming cosmopolitan group. As we live in such a central position, she often comes in for a chat when going or coming from town, and keeps us abreast of happenings which we would otherwise ignore completely. It is an inspiration to meet a Russian of her type, with enthusiasm for her country and faith in its future, in spite of the present *débâcle*.

She had rather a *macabre* experience, though, when she took her children to a place she owns in Bessarabia, near Ackerman. One morning shortly after her arrival she went into the town. A wave of terrorism was sweeping through it. The peasants were in the graveyard, savagely digging up the bones of long-deceased

nobles and throwing them to hungry curs, who were growling at the gates. They were desecrating the church, smashing the windows and behaving generally like madmen. She returned hastily to her home, ordered the farm-horses to be harnessed, put her children into a cart, and drove as far as she could on the way to Odessa until night fell, when they slept in a field; and after a series of adventures, more diverting than alarming, arrived safely back in Odessa. Most other refugees have more tragie tales to tell.

CHAPTER V

NOVEMBER 1917-FEBRUARY 1918

INCREASING DIFFICULTY AND DANGERS—UKRAINIANS—B. ARRESTED
AND RELEASED—"BATTALION OF DEATH"—STREET FIGHTING—
RACOVSKI.

NOVEMBER.

YESTERDAY B. went to interview one of the heads of a military section, and found at the desk the General's chauffeur, appointed by the Soviet to replace his master. In other departments also the officers have resigned office because they can no longer enforce their orders.

The Russian Navy is powerful in the port. The sailors have driven away their officers and there is a Soviet on every ship. We hear sinister tales of midnight trials on board the *Almas*. The Soviets hunt down and arrest unpopular officers, many of whom have never been heard of since their arrest.

One ship's company decided not long ago to sail to another port. Three delegates went to call on the former Admiral of the Fleet, and asked him to come on board, as the crew wished to make him a farewell presentation. He had always been popular with the men, but his wife feared treachery and tried to persuade him not to go. Her entreaties were in vain, however, for he hoped to influence his former subordinates and urge mild behaviour upon them, so went down to the port. He was escorted on board and heard somewhat the following speech: "Admiral, we

have always been satisfied with you and wish to prove in the new, glorious days of liberty we have not forgotten our gratitude for your humane treatment of us in former times. We are leaving Odessa, and wish you to accept a souvenir from us!" A twenty-two pound box of sugar was then brought forward and laid at his feet! He thanked the donors and wished them a safe journey, asking that the sugar be put in the droshki in which he had driven to the port, as he was too old and infirm to carry it himself. The Chief of the Soviet (formerly a stoker) shouldered the box willingly and did as requested. From the dock the Admiral saw them set forth. As there were no officers on board, before the ship got out of the port it was already in difficulties and could not proceed. He obtained a rowboat and went to their aid. Under his direction the sailors were able to manœuvre until they reached the open sea. After pointing a moral from this mishap, he descended to his rowboat and left them to their own devices. They crowded to the ship's side and gave him several hearty cheers. In a few hours the ship was out of sight.

Later.

We often hear firing in the streets during the night. On going to market the other morning Mitru saw a man lying on the sidewalk. No one was near. He approached and found the unfortunate being had been shot in the back and was quite dead, lying in a pool of blood.

General Vivesco has arrived and is taking on the direction of the Mission under extraordinarily complicated conditions. The French Mission under Colonel Arquier, which co-operates with ours, is having a difficult time also, though the French are more popular than the Roumanians. The cause of friction between

the Roumanians and Russia is the large quantity of supplies stored in sheds near the wayside stations all the way from Odessa to Jassy on the only line of communication, the Bessarabian railroad.

Bands of armed desperadoes ride up to these sheds at night and make off with boots, overcoats, guns, or anything else that strikes their fancy. The guardians (Russians) are either indifferent or sharing the loot. General Barthelot (the French reorganizer of our army), deeply concerned, is urging the Roumanian Government to send enough troops into Bessarabia to protect these supplies, so vitally necessary to our army. Complaints and inquiries at this end are of no avail. In fact, there is such havoc that about every twenty-four hours a complete change of personnel takes place in all the departments, and negotiations and explanations have to be recommenced.

DECEMBER.

We have had no newspapers for a month. The electric lighting is so undependable we are obliged to have candles always handy, which we light with embers, as matches are unobtainable. In order to purchase sugar, coal-oil, soap or bread, the orderlies have to stand for hours in line before the distributing centres, now directed by the Soviets, often returning empty-handed. Our supply of fuel is running low, so we have one hot meal a day only. As in Jassy, the elementaries of life are the sole topics of conversation. Bombs have been found in our neighbourhood—the object being to blow up a bank, but luckily the bank officials found them in time.

In spite of all this the opera is crowded every night. Soldiers occupy the boxes and the best seats, accompanied by their womenfolk in fine feathers, whom they embrace openly when so disposed. Pickpockets are active when the audience is leaving. Several Rou-

manians have been relieved of large sums. B. has been to Jassy (a most uncomfortable trip) to see how the arrangements for our departure are going on. He found that it will not be possible to get the documents in order until after the New Year. Judging from reports, Siberia is very much disturbed by political parties fighting each other for the direction of the chief cities. I begin to have misgivings about ever getting out of Odessa, though dozens of Roumanians have been leaving every day for weeks in the overerowded trains, hoping to get to France by way of Archangel.

Later.

In what used to be a school for young ladies of noble families is installed the headquarters of a political party called Ukrainians. All Southern Russia was anciently known by the name of Ukraine, and its inhabitants differed in every respect, including language, from the Northern Russians. Lately the idea of a Ukrainian Republic as opposed to a central Bolshevik Government in Petrograd has become popular among the more educated people hereabouts. They have organized a strong group in the hope of dominating the partizans of violent revolutionary changes, such as confiscation of property and terrorism, and of inspiring national sentiment in the inhabitants of the Ukraine.

The flag adopted is blue and yellow. It floats from many buildings. The soldiers of the Ukrainian Party wear green bands on their arms, but it does not require superhuman penetration to realize that they have two bands—one in the pocket and one in view; one green, one red—adherence to either Ukrainian or Bolshevik Party being easily purchased with two hundred to two hundred and fifty roubles.

JANUARY 1918.

On New Year's Eve we were invited to the house of a Russian General for supper. Shooting was so con-

stant in our neighbourhood, we debated for some time before venturing out, but at last decided to risk it. Our evening's conviviality was considerably dampened by the tide of street fighting sweeping backward and forward in front of our entertainer's house. About 3 a.m. we ventured home.

The past month has been more crowded with events than years of normal life. We are now living in an agonizing uncertainty—every hour full of excitement. The Russians have declared themselves at war with the Roumanians and are fighting against them fiercely for the possession of the provisions and munitions in Bessarabia. We had had absolutely no communication from Jassy since Christmas, and the first intimation we had of these conditions was B.'s arrest as he left the house on January 7th. He was taken on board the *Almas* and detained overnight as a hostage, but the energetic intervention of the Consuls secured his release unharmed.

The Roumanian deserters continue to parade the streets, and in ever increasing numbers. They call themselves the "Battalion of Death," and are now an active menace to our colony.

B. was unfortunate lately in getting a small cut infected while shaving, and as a result was obliged to undergo a slight, though painful, operation. He suffers considerably and is obliged to take daily treatments at the military hospital. Ill as he is, he has undertaken to come to some agreement with the "Battalion of Death" leaders, attempting, in co-operation with our Consul and a committee of senators and deputies, to win back the deserters' allegiance to their native land. I fear their efforts will be fruitless—it is too late.

The Bolsheviki and the Ukrainians, on the other hand, are more and more antagonistic towards each other.

Rumours of the approach of a strong German and Austrian army are circulating freely. The wildest, most fantastic reports have dulled our powers of credulity, but one thing is certain: we are in a grave and desperate situation. The rosy vision of leaving for America has faded from our minds.

When we first came to Odessa the Russian authorities placed a handsome automobile at B.'s disposal in exchange for one lent by the Roumanians in Jassy to the Russian Commission there. Since the New Year there have been several attempts to deprive the Commission of it, but B. has managed to parry them all successfully until to-day.

This morning about ten we heard the noise of heavy footsteps in the entrance hall, then an insistent knocking at our door. Mitru called: "Who is there?" A pause. "Friends," was the reply. We hesitated nervously. Heavy blows were rained on the door. Better open than have the door battered down, I thought. When Mitru unfastened the lock, seven men (four in civilian clothes and three in Russian sailors' uniforms armed with rifles) rushed in.

"Where is the auto? We want the Commander's auto," they shouted.

A charwoman, who was polishing the dining-room floor, rose from her knees, panic-stricken, and ran through the hall towards a door leading to the interior courtyard. The three sailors couched their rifles and ran after her, crying, "Stop! Stop!" which only made her run the faster. Whether or not they thought she was the auto I am unable to decide.

Mitru took the spokesman by the lapel of his coat and said quietly and reasonably:

"Listen, comrade; the Commander is not here—neither is the auto. We couldn't keep it in the house, you know. How could it mount the flight of steps at



COMMANDER BASILE CASTAÑO

the entrance? The auto must be at the Commission Office. You know where it is—near the Sobor. Why don't you go there to look for it?"

We knew for days past B. had ordered it always to stop on a side street at some distance from his office.

"Nevertheless, if you wish to search the house, you are quite at liberty to do so," I added.

Sullenly they followed me from room to room, making no comments and touching nothing. The three sailors returned from the lower regions looking somewhat sheepish. They confabulated for a few minutes in the hall-way, then filed out, frustrated and apparently puzzled. When B. returned at noon he told me that he had left the auto at the door while he went to interview the Count de Visart, farther up the street; when he came out half an hour later it was gone. Efforts to find it this afternoon were fruitless; doubtless our visitors of the morning, finding it after they left here, intimidated the chauffeur and went off with it.

JANUARY 20TH.

The Bolsheviki and Ukrainians have come to blows at last. For the past three days they have fought each other in the streets for the possession of the city.

We noticed unusual activity in the streets last Sunday. From our windows we could see small detachments of cavalry riding by, autos passing stacked with guns, trucks with mitrailleuses. Several large cannons were dragged by sailors from the port. Desultory firing during the night has become so frequent that we pay no attention to it, but on Monday morning a barricade of park benches across the wide street in front of our house, and two small cannons planted on the base of the statue of Poushkin before the door, convinced us that a serious affair was afoot. Cautious reconnoitring showed us that the Reds were in possession

of the neighbourhood. Soon firing began and lasted uninterruptedly for several hours. The house was scored with hundreds of shots; the basement window wells were convenient trenches. The second day a wicked-looking tank rushed up and down, firing in every direction. Once, in turning, the end of the cannon brushed against the dining-room window. We could see the Red Cross nurses from a near-by hospital come out with stretchers and a white flag to pick up the fallen. The Ukrainians seemed to be getting the best of it, when the Reds had a brilliant inspiration. Their party have the almost unanimous support of the sailors in the harbour. These manœuvred their ships to the quays and began to fire the heavy cannons straight up the principal street. The sailors are from distant ports, and look upon Odessa as a fine place to loot; they have no care for the preservation of its buildings or monuments. The vibration from the first shot of the big guns shivered our front windows to pieces in a most curious fashion. It was as though a tiny ball had passed through the centre of each, where the resistance was the strongest, and broken the panes in even triangles all around. The glass trembled for a moment, then fell into the rooms with a deafening crash!

To vary the monotony, we received visits from bands of sailors, who, excusing their entry on the score of hunting for fire-arms, presented themselves with numerous souvenirs. The first time they entered the house was just after the windows were broken. We were all together in Mitru's room, which faces on the courtyard, whither we had hastily transported the children's beds. B. was on the couch, Barbu and Sybilica on either side of him, trying to distract their attention from the row outside by drawing them a picture in coloured crayons. Christine and I were in consultation as to the advisability of having the mess of

broken glass cleaned up or leaving it where it was. Suddenly the back door opened and the *dvornik* came in, pushed from behind by six or seven sailors armed (literally) to the teeth. The first seized B., who had risen, by the arm, passing his hand over his pockets to make sure that no arms were concealed there. B., furious, kept pushing him towards his comrades at the door, saying: "Afara! (Get out of here). Don't you see there are only women and children? Search the rest of the house, if you want to!" Barbu began to scream. One of the sailors, a gigantic fellow, approached him and, leaning over, said: "Now, don't be frightened, I won't hurt you!" unconsciously waving a revolver a few inches away from the child's nose, which naturally did not reassure him. He ran to the door and out into the front hall—I after him, my heart in my throat. While I tried to soothe him, the sailors went on to search the rest of the rooms. On returning, I found Sybilica had disappeared. I cried out her name with surprise and fear. "Here I am, Mummie," she replied, poking her little blond head out from under her crib, where she had prudently taken refuge from the storm.

Mr. Ray telephones every evening from the Consulate to know if we advise him to return home, as his rooms are in our street.

JANUARY 23RD.

The Reds have won. This morning, all being quiet, I went out about eleven and saw the statue of Catherine the Great tied up in sacking. Hundreds of spent bullets were strewn on the sidewalks. The cellars of the two hotels in our neighbourhood, the "Petrograd" and "Londra," had been "requisitioned," and the pavement in front of the buildings was red with spilt wine—the air reeked of the fumes. Bottles with the necks broken off were nearly as numerous as the bullet

cases. There was hardly anyone about. Fortunately, we had sufficient provisions in the house during the siege of fighting. Many acquaintances were faint for want of food before they dared venture out, and even so, frequently returned empty-handed, as there was no market and the shops had the iron shutters fast closed. We are informed that there are at least 15,000 Russian officers in hiding in Odessa, but they seem to have no initiative or idea of organization. It is strange that they did not prefer assisting the Ukrainian Party to being hunted down, as they are certain to be by the extremists in power. The number of those who are actively killing and looting is comparatively small—the population is abject, supine; all that is needed is a leader to restore order.

Preparations for a collective interment of the patriot (!) Bolsheviki who died during the fight are going on. Several bright red coffins have been taken past the house on the *tonneaus* of open cars, also wreaths of artificial flowers and palms at least eight feet in circumference. We have not been able to learn the exact casualties, but think several hundred must have been killed. The railway station has been very badly damaged, and the green cupolas of the church opposite are rent with deep fissures. Loose bricks, splintered glass and other débris are strewn thickly on the pavement.

The situation of our colony will be more difficult now. While the firing was going on a number of Roumanians living in hotels were arrested in the night, but most of them have been freed since, by liberal bribing. We lead a stirring existence, friends of the arrested gentlemen coming at all hours to implore B. to make further efforts to restore them to their families. We have had our windows replaced at ruinous prices.

JANUARY 28TH.

We have learned this morning that Racovski has arrived, sent by Lenin and Trotski to take charge of the situation in Odessa, now that it is entirely in Bolshevik hands. I have heard of this man vaguely before, but the consternation which seized our colony when the news was known made me insistent to know all possible details concerning him. He is of Bulgarian origin, a doctor by profession. His family had some property in the part of Dobrogea ceded to Roumania many years ago. He received his early education in Roumanian schools, and was a Roumanian subject by law, though he evidently cherished a consuming hatred of Roumania in his heart, like every true son of Bulgaria. As a young man of considerable intellectual attainments, he became prominent in the Socialist Party, and on account of his activities was exiled from Constantza, where he lived. He had been for years hand in glove with the International Socialist party, and is an intimate friend of Lenin. Since the Revolution he had been imprudent enough to return to Roumania, and used all his power to persuade our soldiers to follow the example of their Russian brethren. We have seen the results of his efforts with our own eyes. However, he overreached himself, and was arrested and in prison in Jassy. How he escaped is a mystery to everyone here. We certainly cannot expect him to be a mild dictator.

FEBRUARY 2ND.

B. was just leaving for the hospital this morning, about eight o'clock, for his daily treatment, when General Vivesco's orderly came in. He told us his master had been arrested last night by a band of mixed Russian and Roumanian Bolsheviks at the same time as M. Georgesco, who is the Foreign Office Commissioner and

lives in the same house. He said that as far as he could learn nearly all the prominent Roumanians had been taken from their families. We had passed a tranquil night, and could not account for B.'s omission from the list of prisoners. The thought that if arrested he could not have medical aid and blood-poisoning might set in overwhelmed me with apprehension. I earnestly insisted that he go to the house of the Italian Consul until we could learn if there was anything possible to be done to free the others, or make another attempt to get news to Jassy.

After an hour of agonized entreaties, my ears always alert for the arrival of the Bolsheviki, B. consented to go, and left on foot, in civilian clothes, for the de Visarts' house, about fifteen minutes' walk away. Nothing untoward happening during the day. At five o'clock I tied a clean shirt for him by a strong string around my waist, and putting on my Raglan, thrust some collars and handkerchiefs in the pockets and went over to the Italian Consulate. The Count had barricaded every door so securely that the sailor servant had much ado to introduce me into the back sitting-room, where I found B. with his hosts. A dozen plans of escape were talked over and rejected. Through the Count's activity a trusty messenger had been dispatched to Jassy, but so many have disappeared without ever giving a sign of life again, I have little hope of this one succeeding. The doctor had been to see B.; that was what pleased me the most.

FEBRUARY 3RD.

Perfectly quiet all day. As I dare not let Mitru leave the house for fear he will be arrested in the street, the cook did the marketing and returned at ease in a droshki. Meat and vegetables have trebled in price, and it is extremely difficult to get any change. I carry

what money will be necessary for a week in the sole of my stocking. It is no use hiding it in one's bodice, as the Bolsheviki thrust their hands in the dresses of the women when they search a house. Christine and Mitru have also considerable sums secreted about their persons.

This afternoon I sent the children with Christine to see B. We put some cigarettes for him on the bottom of a candy box, fitted a piece of cardboard above and placed some pebbles, wrapped in paper like the bonbons here, on top—in case anyone should open the box, for frequently people with parcels are stopped and cigarettes would surely be confiscated. He was pleased with the surprise, and the Countess replaced the pebbles with real candies for the messengers on the return trip.

I am hourly expecting the visit of the Bolsheviki—they are bound to come.

CHAPTER VI

FEBRUARY 1918

VISIT FROM BOLSHEVIKI—B. A VOLUNTARY HOSTAGE—FUNDS REQUISITIONED—INTIMATE GLIMPSES OF BOLSHEVIK RÉGIME.

FEBRUARY 4TH, *about 1 a.m.*

TO-DAY, as I was beginning my luncheon, a young man known to me by sight as connected with the Roumanian shipping service, came to the house. Asking him to sit down at the table, I inquired the object of his visit. He told me that some Roumanian friends, having succeeded in disguising themselves, were hiding, and had sent him to ask my husband's advice as to whether or not they should give themselves up to Racovski, who had published and placarded all over the town a notice saying that if the Roumanian men would offer themselves to him voluntarily they would be well treated, and darkly hinting that if they did not do so the worst might be expected on their discovery. While engaged in earnest conversation (in French) with him, I heard sinister rapping on the door with the butt of a gun, the signal of the arrival of a Bolshevik band. Resistance was out of the question. I told Mitru to open the door. Immediately a band of about a dozen rough fellows entered the room, and their leader, approaching the table where I was sitting, addressed me in Russian. I replied that my Russian was not sufficiently good to sustain a conversation. Then a voice from the back-

ground called out: "She can speak Roumanian all right"—this coming from an ex-Roumanian soldier who had evidently known me by reputation in Galatz. However, an interpreter came forward and the conversation was continued in French. The first question asked was:

"Where is your husband?" I replied that I did not know.

"When did you last see him?" I said that three days before he had left the house to go to the hospital for treatment, and since then I had not seen him.

Turning to the young man who was sitting at the table, they inquired: "Who is this?"

My heart sank, when to my amazement came the reply: "Do not dare to touch me; I'm a British subject."

I thought that the poor young man had gone out of his mind, as I had not heard him say one word of English, but on demand he produced a paper from his pocket, proving he was a British subject, born in Malta, although his real nationality was Greek. Seeing irrefutable proof of his British citizenship, the Bolsheviki relinquished their hold on him, and though loath to leave me, he quitted the house instantly and, as I learned later, went to the American Consul's office to inform him of what was going on.

The uniforms of the band—most of them stolen from the British deposits—were fastened with buttons stamped with "Georgius Rex" and the lion and the unicorn, and were decorated by bandoliers containing several hundred cartridges. All were young—some mere boys of eighteen or twenty; each carried a gun with fixed bayonet, as well as two revolvers, so that altogether the ensemble presented was reminiscent of the "Pirates of Penzance." They kept their caps on all the time, but the leader, unmistakably a Jew, addressed

me deferentially. While they were turning everything upside down, the telephone rang. I seized the instrument quickly and found it was the Countess. Replying abruptly to her questions as to how we were getting on and saying that I was occupied at the moment, I rang off. On going to the nursery I asked the men not to alarm the children, who were in their cribs, about to have their afternoon nap. They complied with the request. Christine had propped up the little ones with pillows and allowed them to play with some toys until the excitement was over. They gazed gravely at the intruders, then Barbu saluted them in military fashion. "Mummie, those were real soldiers," he exclaimed, much impressed, when they were gone, after searching in every corner of the house, seizing all the papers on which they could lay their hands, and on departure taking Mitru with them. I had no doubt of the affection he bore us, but greatly feared that he would be terrorized into revealing the place of refuge of my husband. About six he returned, white to the lips. They had held a revolver to his head, saying that he would be shot if he did not reveal the secret. He had not done so, and had so earnestly professed his entire ignorance that they let him go on his promising that if he did learn anything he would immediately inform them. He also had expressed the most hearty adherence to Bolshevism. While he was before the Soviet, a comrade of his was led out and shot in the courtyard.

Sentries are posted about the house, so that I can no longer go out for fear of being followed. The leader of the Bolsheviki band warned me before departing that should my husband not be found in twenty-four hours I would be arrested in his place.

While Mitru was gone Mr. Ray drove up to the house ; he had hastened to me as soon as warned by my British subject. He was stopped at the door by a sentinel,

but allowed to enter when he said who he was. He was most indignant when he heard of the doings of this afternoon, and told me he would go at once and expostulate with Racovski on this "unpardonable outrage," as he termed it. Fortunately every one considers me to be an American, so that makes it easier for him to protest. I have telephoned to the Countess de Visart saying that I would come and see B. tomorrow—I think I have managed to conceal my disquietude from her.

I am overcome with sheer exhaustion, yet know I cannot sleep. It is a blessing to have Mitru back alive and I feel easier now about the sentries, as their vigilance will protect us from marauders. An hour ago Mr. Ray telephoned, telling me he had seen Racovski, who promised that the house will not be visited again, also saying that he (Mr. Ray) would come to see me in the morning.

FEBRUARY 5TH.

The result of Mr. Ray's interview with Racovski was by no means as favourable as I had hoped. Racovski is determined to have B. as prisoner. He told Mr. Ray he could not answer for B.'s life were he discovered by the "Battalion of Death," for they suspect he is in one of the Consulates and know that the Consuls are powerless to protect themselves. He declared that less harm would be likely to befall B. in prison than out, and so forth. Mr. Ray had not yet told B., and came to talk the matter over with me before doing so, though of the opinion that B. should decide his fate for himself. Mr. Ray thinks the Soviet will keep its word for very shame before the Consuls, whom the members desire earnestly to impress favourably. I feel that an accident could be smoothly explained away were B. to disappear. I don't trust Racovski or any of the Reds.

As I could not bear to give up without further efforts, we decided to go together in the afternoon to see Prince Sebastian Moruzzi, who is a friend of B.'s, and years ago did some signal service for Racovski, who is supposed to be grateful to him. M. Moruzzi has taken refuge in a sanatorium, in company with other notable Roumanians who have been able to do so, where the doctors endeavour to protect them from the Bolsheviki's attention, charging them ruinous prices the while. Mr. Ray asked him if he thought we could trust Racovski's word, and his opinion on another point—if Racovski had the Soviet well in hand. M. Moruzzi was cautious and reflective. He told us to rely on him implicitly to do what he could, but was very urgent in suggesting expedients to get B. away in disguise. He had his doubts as to Racovski's influence with the Soviet to restrain violence—his strength lay in suggesting further excesses.

Much depressed, we left the sanatorium. It was now dusk, but, still unwilling to resign myself, I begged Mr. Ray to accompany me to the house of an English friend who knows Odessa well, and I thought might suggest some way for B. to escape. On nearing the house we stopped the droshki away down the street, dismissed it, and saw the driver turn the corner before approaching. Since my last visit the iron grill had been backed with planks; after ringing several times, the dvornik's head appeared through a small door cut in them. He reluctantly admitted us. Our friends were most sympathetic and kind, but could suggest nothing practical to help. After we had been talking sadly for half an hour, the bell rang again. Instantly we extinguished the lights and sat still as mice. One of the daughters asked through the door who was there. It was a delegate from the Soviet to search the house and certify that the number of persons reported as in it during the last twenty-four hours was correct. Miss

V. II. replied that the family were in bed, and requested him to return on the morrow as early as he liked. There was a low-voiced parley; the dvornik seemed to insist that everything was in order, whereupon he departed. This convinced me of the folly of further evasion. After pressing ten roubles into the dvornik's hand, we walked the long three miles home, Mr. Ray endeavouring most kindly to encourage and console me. We dreaded what might have occurred in our absence, but found tranquillity, though the household awaited my return anxiously.

FEBRUARY 7TH.

Yesterday afternoon Mr. Ray suddenly appeared with B. I was speechless when I saw them come in quite simply, as if everything were normal. Mr. Ray told me that in the morning he had been to see Racovski again and exacted further guarantees and promises from him. He then went to B., who with great difficulty had been restrained by the de Visarts from leaving their house; he hardly gave Mr. Ray time to explain all the circumstances before taking leave of his hosts. They had walked down the Pushkinskaiya, apparently attracting no attention. B. told me that no hell could be more unsupportable than the suspense and anxiety tearing at his heart since he had left us, though, of course, he was unaware of the Bolsheviki visit until informed by Mr. Ray.

Presently they went to interview Racovski. I had no hope of clemency, and expected B. would be immediately imprisoned. It was therefore an intense surprise to see both return after an hour. Racovski had received them alone, had talked reasonably and with moderation about the situation. Russia and Roumania being at war, B., as head of the Commission, was legally a prisoner of war; later he hoped to make him a prisoner

on parole, etc. B. said he was quite ready to join the other prisoners and wished no favours, though he trusted his capture would result in the rest of the colony being left in peace. Mr. Ray intervened and suggested B.'s remaining at home overnight. Racovski consented with alacrity, seemingly pleased to comply with the request. And here they were.

The children were happy to have a romp with Daddy. After they had been tucked in bed we got to work on B.'s baggage, packing two valises and the tea-basket with comforts and necessities, talking over future possibilities the while, and trying to foresee and plan to meet all eventualities. B.'s faith in Roumania's star continues firm—"Roumani nu pierie" (Roumanians will never perish) is his conviction—and he finds many cogent reasons for not giving way to despair.

Mr. Ray had an early breakfast with us. The last moment was hard, in spite of our best efforts. Mitru protestingly called a droshki and put the valises in, and they were off. Mr. Ray returned at noon to tell me that he had accompanied Racovski and B. on board the ship *Imperator Trajan*, where B. had been put with the other prisoners, his friends. In the presence of Mr. Ray, who understands and speaks Russian well, Racovski had made a speech to the prison guards, pointing out that B. was an important prisoner, the only Roumanian who had acted a patriot's part in giving himself up voluntarily, and how he desired him to be treated with every consideration. Indicating Mr. Ray, he told them he was the American Consul, to whom he had given his solemn word of honour that no harm should come to B.

Among many compassionate friends the Countess came to see me to-day, also Princess Wolkonski. The latter knew I had been keeping careful detailed notes of the strange doings here lately. She suggested that

I give them to her for safe keeping, but just before she came I had been seized with a sudden panic and had thrust them in the stove.

One of the Bolsheviks who searched the house was heard to say as he left: "That for Pantazzi, when I see him!" slapping his hip where the revolver hung from his belt. Who knows what he will do—Racovski or no Racovski! B. may have been *en enfer* at the de Visarts', but I am there now.

FEBRUARY 8TH.

The Roumanian Consul has so far escaped arrest by hiding. As he can do nothing to protect the colony, Mr. Ray has undertaken to look after the interests of the Roumanians, one reason being that all the Americans, except one young officer and his small office staff, have left Odessa, so he is freer than the other Consuls, who each have much on their hands, especially the Count de Visart, who is burdened with the care of hundreds of Italian refugees from Roumania, as well as a large population here. Everyone in the colony feels encouraged since this has been arranged, though all the power Mr. Ray actually possesses is the sympathy the Bolsheviks imagine he has for their "democratic reforms."

Years ago in Galatz epigrams were *à la mode* and B. composed several. One was about Alexandre, who, knowing everyone in town, was a conspicuous figure at funerals. B. said that the day he did not see Alexandre following the coffin he would be sure he was in it! About me he said that were I the last person alive in the world, I would find consolation for my loneliness by writing letters to myself!

For the next couple of days there is nothing I can do but wait until a suitable opportunity presents itself to ask permission to visit B. in prison. Madame

Georgeseo is kept a prisoner in her own house. She telephones me despairingly. Her husband being delicate, she is distracted with anxiety, and now, prevented from going out, she can do nothing for him. Mr. Ray, harassed on all sides, has promised to do what he can to have her released. I hear that the Bolsheviki are getting very cunning in their search for money, valuables and fire-arms. They climb up to the top of the high stoves, run their bayonets through sofa-cushions and mattresses, even stripping the paper from the walls. They make the inmates of the houses they enter remove their shoes and stockings too. I shall have to hide my money elsewhere. One woman saved her jewels by winding them in a ball of wool which rolled on the floor, a plaything for the kitten, while the Bolsheviki searched the house. At night she unravelled her knitting to begin again on the morrow, should need arise, for wool is scarce. Another hid her banknotes in the wood-pile, but the bundle disappeared and she did not dare to inquire for it among her servants. Others have buried their rings in flower-pots and sewed their bank-notes in the trimming of hats or sleeves and hems of gowns.

Later.

Hearing through the Count that one of the prisoners, an elderly gentleman from Braila, had been promised liberation to-day, I hastened to Madame Admiral Spirapol's apartment to tell her about it, as he is her brother-in-law, and she had written me such a sad note about him. I got there about eleven o'clock. I noticed some soldiers hanging about the apartment-house entrance, but did not attach any particular importance to their presence. When I entered the apartment on the third floor Madame Spirapol came forward to meet me. Hardly waiting to hear my errand, she burst forth :

"What are you to do now? Ten minutes ago a soldier came to say Florica and I are arrested and that no one can leave the apartment. They let anyone come in—it is a trap—for they are convinced my husband is hiding and will come to see us."

Her husband is not in town. Knowing she had some handsome jewels, I asked her what she had done with them.

"I have tied them in a handkerchief and put them in the teapot," she replied.

"And your money?"

"We took the front board off the piano and tacked the bills in with thumb-tacks."

"Give me the diamonds and I will take them to Mr. Ray for safe keeping," I proposed.

"How can you leave?"

"Don't worry about that!"

She produced a knotted handkerchief from the teapot and I slipped it in my pocket. Florica was remarkably calm. I hoped Mr. Ray's intervention would free them. I went confidently to the front door, but could not unfasten the lock. The Russian servant appeared.

"You are not allowed to leave—the Soviet's deputy will be here presently; he will decide if you can go," she said.

"What do you mean?" I asked her. "Don't you know I am an American, a friend of the Revolution? The deputy will be angry if you detain me."

She hesitated. I put my hand again on the door, Madame Spirapol and Florica looking on anxiously. She opened it. I walked slowly and deliberately down the stairs. Hardly had I gone down one flight than I heard Madame Spirapol's voice calling me in tragic, whispered French.

"I'm afraid you will be searched as you go out of

the big door," she said. "I am terrified of losing my diamonds—Florica's heritage. I would rather risk keeping them. I'm going to conceal them in my hair."

It seemed an excellent inspiration. I ran back and handed them to her, then went quickly out of the house. On passing through the door I saw sentries posted on either side of it. The grimy idlers were still lounging near, smoking cigarettes. I did not as much as glance at them, and no attempt was made to detain me. I crossed the street so Madame Spirapol could see me from her window, though I refrained from looking upward.

When I got to the Consulate I found it besieged by an anxious crowd. All had the same story to tell of arrested women. I told the Consul in two words of Madame Spirapol's plight, pointing out as forcibly as possible that as her young daughter was with her, intervention was urgent, and hastened home. A villainous-looking Jew was seated on the back steps, smoking a pipe. We never enter by the front way now—the door is triply bolted. I gasped involuntarily. He rose and said:

"Don't be surprised, madame; I'm only Constantinesco!"

So it was—one of the Roumanian sergeants in B.'s service, who had so effectively disguised himself that I had not recognized him. He explained that he had been in hiding, but full of solicitude about B., had obtained this outfit (he speaks Russian fluently) and come to reconnoitre. He had already learned from Mitru of our deplorable situation, and promised to return every morning and remain in the house when I am obliged to leave it.

Following evening.

Unable to settle down to anything with so much on my mind, I went again this morning to the Consulate

to ask Mr. Ray if he would not get Racovski's permission for me to go to visit B. on board the prison ship, a favour already granted to some other women.

"You had better go in and ask him yourself," he replied, pointing to the door of his private office. "I fancy he is in a good humour, counting his millions!"

It was only too true. From the moment of his arrival in Odessa, Racovski had been endeavouring to locate the Roumanian Government funds—the Revolution needs grease to keep the wheels going. B. had caused a story to be circulated that the funds had been sent to Jassy by aeroplane long since, but Racovski had not slackened his efforts on hearing that.

How he discovered that part of them had been deposited in the American Consulate would make a long, miserable tale of terrorism and betrayal of trust. Mr. Ray said he had come with a paper authorizing him to use them for "impoverished Roumanians in Odessa," but it was impossible to resist him, paper or no paper.

Overmastered by the desire to obtain the permission, I entered the private office, and sitting before the desk saw a thin, bearded man, whose bright and piercing eyes bent frowningly upon me. On my addressing him in English his face relaxed. He replied in the same language, speaking with a pure accent and fluently, and after a few moments' conversation actually bade me take a seat. My fascinated eyes were riveted on the desk, which was piled a foot deep with bank-notes of every colour and description. He granted my request, and even shook hands with me at my departure. There must have been millions on that desk.

On my way home I saw a woman going along the street, followed by a soldier with fixed bayonet in his gun. Walking down the Deribasskaiya, I was just about to cross over to the opposite pavement on account of

the crowd, when suddenly there was some jostling. I noticed a woman near me wearing a handsome fur over her shoulders, and the thought went through my mind: "What folly to wear a thing like that these days," when the woman uttered a sharp exclamation—the fur had been snatched from behind. I walked on quietly as if nothing had happened. Women are often forced to remove their boots and overshoes in the street. A friend of mine, a wealthy Belgian, had her auto requisitioned. She protested that she was not a Russian, and no one had the right to take it. "What does that matter?" replied the delegate. "In the French Revolution wasn't Marie Antoinette's car requisitioned?"

Madame K., the wife of the Greek Consul, came to see me this afternoon. She told me, as absolutely authentic, the story of one man in town who, indignant at the spinelessness of the population in general, decided to resist requisitions of any kind. He told his wife that should anyone attempt to take anything of theirs he would be ready for them. He had managed to retain his revolver, and when he went out for his daily stroll about dusk, put it in his pocket. A man brushed past him in the street. Instinctively he felt for his watch. Finding it gone, he seized a passer-by by the arm and, significantly waving his weapon, demanded, 'Give me the watch!' The man gave it instantly. Triumphant, he returned home to recount his adventure. His wife met him at the door.

'You are a little late,' she exclaimed, "but I am not surprised, as it is the first time I have known you to go out without your watch!"

The Soviets are greatly exercised over the time. In the last ten days the Duma clock has been put back or forward an hour at a time almost daily. It struck (for the last time) this morning, and though I daresay

they are still tinkering with it, its internal economy must be so outraged by the waste of time at present that it has given up attempting to record it.

FEBRUARY 12TH.

Since B.'s arrest the house has not been visited by the Soviet. I have been several times to see him, although I am only allowed to remain ten minutes, and we are never alone. The guards understand Roumanian, but we can speak French or English a little before they can get an eavesdropper who understands those languages to stand near the door. The Bolsheviki annoy and vex the prisoners continually, and set them all the degrading tasks they can think of. B. refused—they threaten much, but until the present have done no violence to any of the hostages. There is a constant racket on board and everything is squalid. The wives of the prisoners are allowed to take them food, and they need it, as the fare served to them is scanty and of poor quality. B. passes most of his time reading. There are about seventy prisoners, including bankers, senators, the President of the Bucharest Chamber of Commerce, the Vice-President of the Senate. An elderly General, M. Crainiciano, formerly Minister of War, and several officers have been so ill that they had to be removed to different sanatoriums, though kept there under guard.

FEBRUARY 14TH.

To-day when I went to see B. I was not allowed to approach the ship. Apprehensive of danger, I went to the de Visarts, and the Count accompanied me to the headquarters of the Supreme Soviet, which has installed itself in the palace of the former governor, now, it may be added, in a filthy condition. After persistent efforts the Count obtained the information that the prisoners

had been transferred to the Turma (the prison for felons and murderers), about a mile distant from the city limits, and obtained a slip inscribed with cabalistic characters, which is to gain me admittance.

The appearance of the guards and others in the palace was unprepossessing in the extreme—the low type of intelligence shown by lack-lustre eyes, receding foreheads and chins, unkempt hair and untidy uniforms contributing towards this impression. There was nothing ferocious in their manners; on the contrary, they were quite insouciant—most of them were chewing sunflower seeds, guzzling tea, or munching huge hunks of bread, while lounging with spurred boots propped up on brocaded satin chairs. It was almost impossible for us to obtain any attention from them. It is patent they must be tools in the hands of such men as Racovski.

FEBRUARY 15TH.

I saw B. in the Turma yesterday. He and his comrades replace the former inmates, who are now at large in the city. The prisoners were obliged to march there on foot, each one carrying his own baggage. They are in heavily barred cells, which are arranged in tiers, as many as four of them in one cell, and are locked in, except for an hour's exercise each day in an interior courtyard. The guards seem to be humane enough, and are very bribable. There is no heating, and all are suffering from the cold. I carried B. an extra blanket over my arm.

We are so steeped in misery and suffering that our horizon is limited to a few hours ahead of the actual moment. The de Visarts have made and unmade their plans a dozen times. The *Archimedes*, the gunboat of the Italian Ambassador to Constantinople, was sent here at the outbreak of the war and is at their dis-

position. They proposed to leave in it for Constantza and asked me to accompany them, but B. fears the mines more than the Bolsheviki, so I declined the generous offer. They finally abandoned the idea themselves.

FEBRUARY 16TH.

Yesterday B. telephoned to me. He was enabled to do so by a complaisant guardian—for a consideration. He said: "Can you manage to come at once to see me? I have something very important to tell you. Make some excuse to get in."

The most effective excuse was a five-rouble note to the door-keeper. Another ten secured us a few minutes' interview alone. He recounted to me that a friend of his in the prison had hidden the equivalent of three millions of roubles, in gold, notes and securities, in his apartment before his arrest. Daily searching parties were visiting the apartment, as he was known to be a wealthy man, and he feared his treasure would be found. He confided in B. and consulted with him as to what he should do. B. wished me to take the money to Mr. Ray and ask him to put it in his safe. Mr. Ray is in a difficult situation. He cannot protect his Consulate if attacked, and has firmly decided to undertake no further responsibilities. However, I agreed to take the money and put it in one of our trunks which has been in the Consulate for over two months.

About dusk a man brought it to me, securely fastened in two heavy cash-boxes, tied together and wrapped in white paper. I had hoped the voluminous coat, under which I had concealed parcels on other occasions, would be useful to hide this one, but it was too unwieldy. I therefore decided to have the messenger follow me with it to the Consulate, which is at a considerable distance from our house. It was rather a

bad time of day to go out, as street shootings are frequent at this hour, but I preferred the risk to keeping the money overnight, for, after having turned over in my mind all the possibilities of burying the package in the cellar, no satisfactory solution had presented itself. I walked slowly along one side of the street; my accomplice followed at a short distance on the other side. When we got near the Consulate, we saw a group of indolent soldiers in front of it. I stopped in the shadow of a house, and when my companion joined me we waited a few minutes to see if they would disperse. Finding they were engaged in a seemingly endless controversy, I resolved to try to enter the Consulate, for I could see a thin line of light shining through the crack of the heavy shutters, proving that the Consul was still in his office. Leaving the man with his package, I rang the door-bell in the peculiar fashion of the initiated; it was opened half an inch. Seeing this, my man stepped forward quickly, handed me the parcel and disappeared. I breathed again when the door was bolted.

Mr. Ray was surprised at my apparition. I told him I had a parcel to put in my trunk. He glanced at it, then said:

"Leave it there," pointing to the top of the safe. "I'll see if I can find a place for it inside." I decided at once that this was the wisest thing to do. We chatted a few minutes. I wanted to stay until I saw it put in, but I could see my presence was interfering with his work. I was anxious also to return to the children, so left for home. I passed a sleepless night, and at the earliest possible hour in the morning returned to the Consulate. There was the parcel exactly as I had left it. Mr. Ray had not yet come in. On his arrival we chatted as before. When he opened the safe and began to arrange his papers, I said carelessly:

"You didn't find a place for my parcel?"

"Dear me, I forgot it!" he exclaimed.

"Well, put it in now."

"What a persistent creature! One would think a fortune was in it."

However, he did put it in, and there it is now.

CHAPTER VII

MARCH 1918

COLONEL BOYLE ARRIVES IN ODESSA—DETAILS OF HIS EFFORT TO
FREE THE PRISONERS.

FEBRUARY 26TH.

MR. RAY called in on his way to the Consulate this morning.

"Do you know," he said, "there is a Canadian in town?"

"Another Canadian here in Odessa? It's impossible—how did he get here?"

"Oh, he dropped from the clouds. He came in an aeroplane."

"Where is he? What did he come for?"

"I want you to go and see him for yourself," Mr. Ray replied; and then gave me the details he knew. It seems that the Canadian is an army officer, a Colonel by the name of Boyle. He has been here once before, also by aeroplane, though neither Mr. Ray nor myself knew of it at the time. It was through Captain Schrantchenko, an habitu  of the Maszewski's Tuesday evening reunions, that Mr. Ray had learned what he told me. It appears Schrantchenko, who lives in the same apartment-house as the M.'s, has been lately in Moscow and in Roumania, where he met this Colonel Boyle, and that he is staying with him. Schrantchenko says the Colonel has offered as a neutral to arrange an exchange of prisoners



LIEUT COLONEL DOYLE

—the Roumanians will give up four hundred they have made in Bessarabia for the seventy-one in the Turma. M. Mendiutti, the Spanish Consul, has seen him. Mr. Ray promised to look up Mendiutti and send him to me, so that he can arrange for me to see Colonel Boyle.

It seems too good to be true that help has come—but can the Colonel do anything *really*? I cannot help hoping—a drowning man seizes at a straw!

GALATZ, APRIL 12TH.

It seems a century ago since I wrote the above words—but the calendar must be right! We have gone through such agony, endured such suspense, that even my inveterate habit of scribbling has been laid aside. Now, in Galatz, I can begin to record our adventures. Since childhood I have always wanted adventures. I read not long ago (R. L. S., I think) that it is never wise to wish for anything too intensely—one might get the wish! I've had mine—and I'm more than satisfied for the rest of my life!

In looking over my notes, I see that my diary stops on the day Colonel Boyle arrived in Odessa to arrange for the exchange of the prisoners. Every detail of what followed is indelibly impressed upon my memory.

The morning of February 26th, after Mr. Ray had left, Mitru told me that several men were watching our house. I looked out of the window and saw it was so, recognizing one man, a (Jewish) Roumanian deserter from the Navy, a detestable character, who imagined he had a grievance against B. and had attempted to blackmail me since his arrest. Fearing to be detained in the house by him and his associates, and thus prevented from seeing Colonel Boyle, I resolved to leave home with Christine and the children and sleep that night at Madame Sophie's. We waited until the cook and her husband went out as usual about four, then scanned the street—the Bolsheviks seemed

to have disappeared and dusk was falling. Locking up everything, we left the house hastily, Mitru remaining behind. A little way up the street we saw a droshki and hailed it; the driver stopped, and just as we were stepping in M. Mendicutti passed. He recognized me, and stopped to say he had been going to the house to arrange to accompany me to the Maszewskis'. I told him I would meet him there about seven. He thought my leaving the house for the night very wise. The news of the Germans approaching Odessa so rapidly, and the impossibility of getting reliable information as to whether or not the Bolsheviki were putting up any resistance, had made an uneasy atmosphere in the town. The wildest confusion and uncertainty reigned at the Soviet. He predicted an orgy of blackmailing and looting, as the worst characters would certainly take advantage of the situation.

Hardly were we inside Madame Sophie's apartment than the door-bell rang. It was a Roumanian soldier—impossible for me to stir, evidently, without its being known. This harmless man had been coming to our house to ask some trifling favour of me, had seen me get into the droshki, and as it crawled along had been able to follow and had seen me enter. I pressed him into service to accompany me to the Maszewskis', in the Preobragenskai, only five minutes' walk away. I felt more confident about the children's safety with Madame Sophie than had I left them at home.

True to his promise, M. Mendicutti awaited me. The Maszewskis themselves were full of excitement and hopefulness, as Schrantchenko had given such glowing accounts of Colonel Boyle. Some of the incidents of his career seemed unbelievable. After a little consultation, M. Maszewski went upstairs to announce our presence and ask if Colonel Boyle would see us. He returned to say that we were requested to come without delay, as the

Colonel was expecting Racovski shortly. I was suffocated with emotion as we mounted the stairway. In a few minutes we were face to face with Colonel Boyle.

Though I had never heard of him twenty-four hours earlier, his very appearance inspired me with confidence. He is a deep-chested man of splendid physique, about fifty years of age, his square jaw and bright blue eyes, under straight brows, giving the impression of reserve force. He wore the khaki uniform of the Canadians. I saw "Yukon" written in block letters on his shoulder-strap, and suspended by a blue ribbon around his neck recognized the Roumanian Order of the Crown.

His surprise at meeting a compatriot equalled my own. We had a long conversation. I related to him in detail what I knew of the situation; he, in turn, told me that in the afternoon the Soviet, presided over by Racovski, had agreed to the exchange of prisoners, and promised to deliver the Roumanians in the Turma to him on the morning of March 12th, providing him with a train to take them to the frontier at Bender, where two of his assistants were to be in waiting in charge of the four hundred Bolsheviki detained by our army. The exchange was to be effected on the spot. Colonel Boyle felt evidently a good deal of sympathy with the Bolsheviki, and was anxious to be scrupulously fair to them in every way. I ventured to say that I thought they were incapable of understanding the meaning of good faith. Colonel Boyle smiled tolerantly, ascribing my animus to B.'s sufferings at their hands. However, he told me to "go home and pack up my traps," for he would take me and the children in the train also. I had to inform him I had a numerous household, and felt bound to take them all with me; he consented to this, warning me that thirty-six hours only were left for our preparations. I knew the prisoners ignored his presence and efforts, and that they were working inside the prison walls, by bribing and every other

means in their power, to win the sympathy of their jailers and wean them from their allegiance to the Bolsheviki—a comparatively easy task, so many of them being discontented because the millennium had done nothing to change their situation. Munitions and provisions were smuggled daily into the Turma. The Turma is a walled fortress, and as a few machine guns were in it, could be held for a long time against the rabble. The prisoners were counting on the German occupation of the city, which seemed inevitable, to release them, IF THEY WERE NOT MADE AWAY WITH BEFORE!

Colonel Boyle thought it would be advisable for M. Mendiutti to go and inform the prisoners of his arrival, so that when the emissaries of the Soviet came to hand them over to him there would be no delay or misunderstanding. Promising to return on the morrow and inform him of the result of this mission, we departed, it being agreed that M. Mendiutti, the Secretary of the Roumanian Legation and myself should go on the following afternoon to the Turma. Descending the stairs, we met Racovski coming up, followed by his satellite, Bujor,¹ a sinister individual with a quantity of black beard.

The next morning we returned to our apartment. During the night there had been several fumbling attempts to enter, but finding the occupants of the house on their guard, the would-be bandits disappeared. The cook's husband, prompted by Mitru, had taken an eloquent part in the arguments, punctuated by thundering blows on the outside of the triply-barred entrance door. He represented that, we being refugees, there was nothing in our apartment worth their while to take.

In the afternoon the two gentlemen called for me in a sorry-looking Victoria—the best they could find—and we began our long drive to the prison. We were easily

¹ Bujor was captured, tried in the civil court in Bucharest, and condemned to the salt mines for life, in June 1920.

admitted, and found the prisoners assembled in the central hall on the friendliest terms with their guardians. As a photographer had been called in, and they were about to have a group photograph taken, they insisted on my being taken with them, placed between the chief warden and General Vivesco, the first of the seventy-one to be arrested. Some of them were sceptical about Colonel Boyle's plan, but we overruled their objections and left them busily making preparations for the morrow.

At home we spent the entire night packing up our belongings, preparing food for the journey and writing notes of farewell to friends who had helped us in our difficulties. About three o'clock I got to bed.

At six-thirty the telephone rang madly. Seized with foreboding, I answered it, to hear B.'s voice. He told me that the "Battalion of Death" had entered the prison at four o'clock in the morning, being admitted by the jailers, who were no longer suspicious of the movements of the Bolsheviki. The leader had made the rounds of the cells, bidding the prisoners prepare to accompany him, as the Soviet wished to return the money, watches and papers taken from them at their arrest before handing them over to Colonel Boyle. Some had been robbed of valuable documents and were anxious to recover them; they did as they were bidden. B., deeming the hour a strange one, had refused to go, as had the majority of the others. He told me, however, his resistance could not long continue, for reinforcements had arrived, and they were getting very rough and insistent. He wished me to inform Colonel Boyle of the facts.

Hardly had I dressed than I saw through the window a couple of heavy trucks passing, on the floors of which were seated several of the prisoners, closely guarded by the Battalion. These trucks were speeding in exactly the opposite direction to the station—in fact, toward the

port. For two whole days we had seen from the boulevard that the ships were keeping up steam, ready for instant flight should the Germans enter Odessa.

At the door I encountered the Russian Prison Commissioner (a Ukrainian), whose conduct towards the prisoners had always been most humane. He spoke a little French, but was in such a state of painful excitement he seemed to have forgotten it. I sent for Madame Dinine, my neighbour in the apartment overhead, who, greatly perturbed herself, translated for me his communications. He said that the Soviet had no intention of keeping the terms of the treaty with Colonel Boyle; Racovski had fled in the night on a ship, taking with him all the money requisitioned from the Roumanians; the rest of the leaders were hiding; the Germans were only a few hours' march away; fleeing Bolsheviks from the front were crowding into the city by hundreds, and were looting and shooting in the Deribasskaiya. He feared some of the prisoners had been murdered—he dared not return to the Turma. Constantinesco, with a few helpers, was in the house to lend a hand with the baggage. I called him and told him to bar the door after me and close the heavy shutters, allowing no one to enter until my return. The children were still asleep.

Begging the Commissioner to accompany me, I made rapidly in the direction of Colonel Boyle's residence, but was fortunate enough to meet him in the street. He was walking along slowly and tranquilly, as if it were any day of the year in Woodstock, his native town. He was incredulous at first, and invited me to accompany him to the meeting-place of the Russian-Roumanian Soviet ("Rumcherod," as it was called), just a few yards away from where we had met. Finding the echoing halls and staircases deserted, he became more willing to listen to my pleadings to accompany me to the port and verify my statement. The Hôtel Londra was next

door, and while Colonel Boyle looked about for a droshki I went in to wait. By this time the Secretary of the Roumanian Consulate joined me. He, too, had heard disquieting rumours, had been to our house and followed me hither. M. Mendicutti lived in the hotel, and the Secretary asked permission to call him to our aid. He ran up to his room, reappearing in a minute with the dapper little man, who had already his overcoat on and hat in hand. As he bent over my hand to kiss it, in his usual gallant fashion, a subtle perfume of "Chypre" pervaded the air. I don't know why, but a hysterical desire to laugh almost strangled me as I caught the delicious whiff.

We sallied forth together. Colonel Boyle was looking with cold disfavour at the Commissioner, who was almost purple in the face from superhuman efforts to convey to him his knowledge of events, though without the slightest success, as his listener speaks no other language but English. Then Colonel Boyle and I got into the waiting droshki; we had to balance ourselves nicely, as we were both over size for it.

"Cabs at home are more comfortable than this," remarked my companion.

The others followed in another vehicle, even more unpretentious than our own. The Colonel chatted on calmly, mostly about Canada; the horse ambled slowly along. I dug my nails into my hands, so impatient was I to reach the port. There we found a strong cordon of Bolshevik guards barring the approach to the vessels which were moored to the quay. Several prisoners were on the decks of the *Imperator Trajan* and *Princepele Carol*. They recognized me from the distance, and on their making despairing signs to me, Colonel Boyle was convinced they were the very men we had come to rescue. There was a pause. The Colonel reflected. Then he turned to me and said:

"I have never worked with a woman before, but let me give you a piece of advice before we go on with this job. Say exactly what I say in translating—do not add anything, or tell these fellows what you think of them. I've been up in the Yukon and know how to deal with men like these; they have never gotten the best of me yet! Now, we'll go and see where Racovski is."

We mounted again in the droshki and drove along the road behind the docks. It was strewn with cases, barrels, planks, and was sodden with mud. In ten minutes we reached the *Stefan-cel-Mare*, the Royal Roumanian yacht—now the residence of the "Battalion of Death." The Secretary called out that an English Colonel wanted to talk to Racovski. "Nu esti aici" (He is not here), called back the sentry.

"Well, let us come on board—we can talk with the tovarishi (comrades)."

Although there was some commotion in the slovenly crowd lounging on the deck, we approached without further preamble, Colonel Boyle leading, and went on board.

"If M. Racovski is not here, we will speak to his deputy," I said, glancing about. In a few seconds a furtive-looking man of doubtful cleanliness and with a three-day stubble growth on his face was pushed forward. He appeared to be about thirty-five years of age.

"Are you the chief?" I asked.

"There are no chiefs in democratic Russia," he replied.

"Can you tell us where M. Racovski is?" I pursued.

"He has gone."

"He promised this English Colonel to deliver seventy-one hostages to him, in order to exchange them for four hundred tovarishi; but the prisoners are taken on board a ship and Colonel Boyle cannot communicate with them."

"I know—we have done it for safety. The Germans

are almost in Odessa. Come with us, also, Madame. We will be glad to help you and the Englishman to escape. We are sailing in a couple of hours."

This speech he delivered in a stilted manner, as if it was a lesson learned by heart, his eyelids twitching, his hands waving about jerkily. I turned to the Colonel and translated this colloquy. Colonel Boyle instructed me to reply, saying in substance that he had made a treaty with the Soviet—failure to deliver the prisoners might be the death-warrant for the four hundred held by the Roumanians; that his arrangements were made; he would escape the Germans, but could not accept the invitation to leave on board; the prisoners were now *his*, not the *Soviet's*, to dispose of, and he called on them to be men of honour and keep their word and bond.

At this a babble of heated conversation broke out among those in the background. After some further parley, Dicheseu (for we learned the spokesman was so called) promised to wait until two in the afternoon, to give Colonel Boyle an opportunity to obtain an affirmation from the Supreme Soviet that they were still of the same mind as when they signed the treaty forty-eight hours earlier, and gave his word of honour he would then deliver the prisoners safe and sound.

We left the ship. The three anxiously waiting near groaned when they learned the result of the interview. The Commissioner (as translated by the Secretary) said he could guide us to the building where Brashoveanu, the Secretary of the Supreme Soviet, was making a desperate effort to organize resistance to the Germans. It was on the outskirts of the opposite end of the town—about five miles distant. We surveyed the sorry-looking beasts—the birjars were dozing on their seats. The Secretary, an active young man, said he would get us an auto. He would walk up the steep stairs to the boulevard and be waiting for us in front of the Londra with the car.

He disappeared, almost running. On our return drive the Colonel and I discussed the possibilities of getting a ship to convey the prisoners to Roumania. We felt the railway was no longer possible. I suggested asking M. Mendiutti to go to the Count de Visart and ask him for the loan of the *Jeanne*—her bunkers were full of coal. No sooner said than done. M. Mendiutti, consenting with eagerness, received a large sum of money from Colonel Boyle to give to the *Jeanne's* captain for necessary purchases of food, in case the Count gave his consent, as we felt sure he would.

The auto did not delay—the four of us climbed in. Passing before my door, I saw that the dray ordered the previous day by Mitru was standing before it, laden with the trunks of friends, whose valuables I have undertaken to convey with mine on the train. To avoid the brawling, window-smashing and shooting as much as possible, we took side-streets, directed by the Commissioner, and at last found Brashoveanu's headquarters. The clamour of hurrying crowds of soldiers echoed through the building; they were rushing aimlessly up and down the stairways. Brashoveanu was calmer than the rest, but in a despairing mood. When he learned our errand, he referred bitterly to Racovski, saying it was useless to try to do anything now—the Soviet was scattered to the four winds, only himself and two others ("poor dupes") were left. He had no power to make the "Battalion of Death" give up the prisoners; not one of the tovarishi would obey him; without a superior force nothing could be done. After considerable urging, he consented to get the remaining two members of the Soviet to sign a paper prepared by the Commissioner on a page torn from his pocket note-book. Asked if he still had the Soviet seal, he answered in the affirmative. With the paper in his hands, he disappeared into an inner room. I sank upon a bench. Everything was in musty disorder—the

odour of boots and perspiration permeated the air. The muffled clatter of guns, banging of doors, shouting of disputants were audible from the corridors. The Commissioner and Secretary consulted together anxiously; Colonel Boyle seemed lost in a brown study—silent, massive, detached!

After a while Brashoveanu returned and held out the paper. It had the large red seal affixed and three illegible signatures.

"This is all I can do," he said. "I wish you luck. I wonder how I am to get out of this hell myself."

We shook hands and left him.

CHAPTER VIII

MARCH 1918 (*continued*)

A TRAGIC DAY—COLONEL BOYLE GOES ON BOARD THE "IMPERATOR TRAJAN" AND IS CARRIED AWAY WITH THE PRISONERS.

EXULTANTLY returning at a rapid pace in the auto, we had a collision with a heavy dray crossing the street in front of us. The car was considerably battered. One of the flying pieces of glass from the broken wind-shield struck me on the head. I felt as if the side of a house had fallen on it. Dizzy and with blood running down into my eyes, I had a moment of discouragement; not so Colonel Boyle. Seeing my handkerchief was soaked, he immediately pulled out a large one from his pocket, which he pressed against my head.

"You're all right; it's only a scratch. They always bleed like that. I'm a doctor, you know, and can fix you up in no time."

The chauffeur managed to get the car in motion again. When we reached home, the door flew open. There were a dozen hysterical women (wives of B.'s fellow-prisoners) in the drawing-room, wanting news of their husbands. A loud cry of lamentation went up at the sight of me. Hot water was brought; Madame Spirapol went quickly to the chemist at the corner for a disinfectant; Mitru ran to call in the Polish physician next door. From my packed valise clean linen and towels were found. Colonel Boyle proceeded to "fix me up." The

wound was just a three-cornered cut in the scalp, but it made my head ache horribly. When the doctor arrived he was satisfied with the Colonel's performance, and bound up my head in an artistic turban of bandages. Colonel Boyle looked at me meditatively:

"I guess you've had enough for one day," he said. "Surely Schrantchenko can get me another interpreter. It is only noon now. I have the paper—that is the essential."

Turning to my friends, he reassured them earnestly—and then left us. Calmed by confidence in his grasp of the situation, they in their turn went to their own homes. Half an hour later, the Secretary, who had gone in the auto to see what was happening in the port, suddenly rushed in like a whirlwind. "Where is Colonel Boyle?" he cried. I told him he had gone.

"If he is not in the port in ten minutes, it will be too late to save the prisoners. The *Stefan-cel-Mare* has drawn away from the dock—she is sailing now. The *Imperator* is preparing to follow."

"Have you the car still?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied.

"Wait!" I said impetuously. "I will show you where the Colonel is."

Christine followed me anxiously to my bedroom. My suit coat was lying on the bed where she had left it spread out to dry, after sponging the bloodstains from it. I drew it on.

"You can't put on a hat. Don't leave the children again!" she protested.

It seemed to me monstrous that the Bolsheviks should carry B. and the others away, and I was firmly resolved to prevent it if humanly possible. I wrapped a motor-veil around my head. "I'll be back in half an hour," I told her, and then ran out of the house. The streets were patrolled; we were stopped twice. I said I was

going to the hospital—they let us go. Arriving at Schrantchenko's house, the Secretary bounded up the stairs three at a time. In two seconds Colonel Boyle appeared—cap in hand. He stepped into the auto at once, without even glancing back. Speed-limits had no interest for us—we careened around the corners on one wheel.

When we got to the dock, we found indeed that active preparations were being made for immediate departure. The gang-plank, with a steep incline up to the *Imperator Trajan*, was crowded with armed soldiers, carrying their campaign sacks on their backs. We went further on. Confusion reigned supreme! Profiting by this, Colonel Boyle thrust aside those who endeavoured to oppose him. The *Stefan-cel-Mare* was in the middle of the basin. She seemed at anchor, but it was impossible to reach her. To the Secretary's shouts a grinning sailor replied that Dichesco was not on board.

"Where is he?"

"Don't know! No use anyway to see him; if you think you are going to get the prisoners, you make a big mistake!"

"Let us try the *Almas*—the Russian Naval Soviet is there!" was suggested. Back over the same route! As the car bumped along over some loose planks and coils of rope, Colonel Boyle turned to me with a sudden smile: "Quite a day for a lady!" he remarked. "I like this sort of thing—do you?" In spite of the anguish tearing at my heart about B., I was surprised to find I rather did.

We got out where the *Almas* was stationed. No attention whatever was paid to us by the hustling, bustling crowd engaged in putting provisions on board. On the deck also we were completely ignored.

"Call out for our friend of this morning," instructed the Colonel.

"Dichesco! Domnul Dichesco!" I called. From the cabin heads appeared. As if pushed from behind, Dichesco

emerged jerkily from a cabin door. Those near gathered about. Something of the following conversation ensued:

BOYLE: "I thought you promised to wait for me."

DICHESCO (*sullenly*): "Well, I'm here."

BOYLE: "Yes, but not at your right address."

DICHESCO: "No use waiting for you, anyway. The Soviet will not consent to give up the prisoners. It is better as it is."

BOYLE: "Don't be too sure of that."

And he produced the paper deliberately from his tunic pocket, in which it had been securely buttoned.

Dichesco instantly recognized the vivid seal—took the paper, read it several times, turned it over, stood on one foot, then on the other, and feeling himself in an awkward position, looked uncertainly behind. Some of the Russian sailors approached, read the paper over his shoulder, and began to insist that he obey and keep his word. His complexion was a sickly green colour by this time.

"Now," said Colonel Boyle, with emphasis, "you are, of course, a man of honour. Come with us and give the order to have the prisoners handed over to me."

He reluctantly accompanied us, standing on the running-board of the auto and casting uneasy glances on every side. More than ever I felt convinced that his was not a normal mind. Once alongside the *Imperator Trajan*, he went up the gang-plank. We followed on his heels, Colonel Boyle and I. The Secretary remained behind with the car, and I saw him no more that day. Dichesco was at once surrounded by his friends on board. While he was talking with them in low tones, a small auto rattled up to the ship's side; two other leaders mounted the gang-plank and joined him. I heard the name "Bujor" muttered, and recognized Racovski's companion of the other evening. He avoided going near Colonel Boyle, and seemed to urge Dichesco to withhold his decision;

but in spite of his whispered insistence the order was given, and the prisoners were brought on deck and marched on to the quay. I did not see B. among them. We could not approach, as they were surrounded by guards with fixed bayonets. One of the prisoners pointed significantly to the *Principele Carol*, just a stone's-throw farther on, where another group were also descending the gang-plank. B. was there, safe and sound! He carried his smaller valise in his hand; at his side was his young adjutant, who had the tea-basket in one hand and the suit-case in the other. Colonel Boyle turned to Dicheseo.

"Good-bye!" he said. "I wish you good luck. Don't trouble about the prisoners; we'll get away before the Germans come!"

We left the ship—but I felt no elation. Lowering faces were on every side. I realized that more than half the Bolsheviki on the ship were Roumanian deserters. The Russian cause was hopelessly lost on the Black Sea coast—where were they to find refuge? By retaining the hostages, they could bargain with our Government for pardon. What did they care about the exchange? Four hundred Russians were nothing to them now!

We approached B. He took a step forward, but the guards prevented his taking a second. Colonel Boyle and he saw each other for the first time. They spoke together a moment. B. demanded why I was there without my overcoat, and also inquired where was my hat. Colonel Boyle wanted to know if all the seventy-one prisoners were present. B. thought they were. Then a sailor came towards us, saying:

"Will Colonel Boyle come on board to sign the release of the prisoners?"

We returned on board. Dicheseo, very evidently at Bujor's instigation, now insisted that a list of the prisoners must be made out, certifying that none was missing, and

further, that the Colonel must promise that the Bolsheviki would receive back their comrades on the same conditions.

"You don't know the Roumanians," he said. "They will hang ten of our comrades for any of theirs who may be missing!"

Colonel Boyle was one—they were a thousand.

He looked at his watch. "Well, be quick about it," he said. "The Germans ought to be here soon, according to your calculations, and they don't like this uniform."

We went into a cabin at the bottom of a short flight of steps. Dichesco drew a list from his pocket and called in a sailor, who sat down and began to write at his chief's dictation. There were constant interruptions, goings and comings, whisperings behind the door. Colonel Boyle preserved his equanimity perfectly, and I followed his example as well as I could. Several times Dichesco asked me if I knew this or that prisoner.

While this was going on, M. Mendiotti came in quite breathless; he had arranged about the *Jeanne*, but it had been impossible to buy any provisions. He said significantly (in French): "The time is short!" In order to comply with some further requests he left us.

When the wearisome list was completed, Dichesco withdrew, saying he would call the other members of the Soviet to sign the formal release of the hostages, as his signature alone was of no value. "Five minutes only, then," assented the Colonel. Hardly had he left us than a sliding panel in the cabin wall was pushed aside softly, and a head thrust through the opening, that of a man with grizzled hair and typical Roumanian features.

"Is that Madame Pantazzi?" he asked.

"Yes."

"I've been listening on the other side of the wall and thought I recognized your voice and accent."

"Who are you?" I demanded.

"I was one of the machinists on the *Lasca* Catargiu when the Commander was on board."

"What are you doing here?" I pursued, with growing agitation.

"I have been a prisoner a long time, and am now forced to work the ship's engines. Get off at once with the Englishman, or you will be carried away—we are casting off."

"Why do you remain?" I asked.

"I cannot do as I please—there is a man at my door with a revolver," was the reply.

Colonel Boyle, who for the first time showed some emotion when this singular colloquy was explained to him, snatched up the papers on the desk and we hastened to the deck. It was thronged so that it was almost impossible to advance to the plank. Once there, we saw the guards below on the dock trying to force the prisoners towards it, and so on to the ship. On descending, Colonel Boyle stood squarely blocking the entrance, a hand on either rail.

While we had been in the cabin a number of the wives of the prisoners, accompanied, some of them, by their children, had driven down to the dock and were now grouped near their friends, many of them terror-stricken and in tears. Colonel Boyle announced his unalterable determination to keep the prisoners from going on the ship, and asked all to be confident and calm.

We waited—it seemed an interminable age; in reality, probably it was only a few moments. Then we observed Dicheseo coming along the dock, and thus he came face to face with us.

"Sign!" said Colonel Boyle, thrusting the papers he still kept in his hand towards him.

"How can I sign? There is no ink," was the astonishing answer.

"Here's a pencil—it will do," said the imperturbable Colonel.

"I will sign," was the energetic response. At that moment he must have made a signal with his hand. The soldiers on the ship began firing down into the helpless crowd. Taken by surprise, Colonel Boyle made an involuntary step forward. Ducking quickly, Dicheseo ran like a rat up the gang-plank. Terrible commotion followed. The firing continued, increasing in violence every second. My first thought was for B., whom I saw standing beside General Vivesco at some distance from me. A sailor near me was holding a revolver at arm's length and seemed about to fire in that direction. Convulsively my hand closed over his, forcing the weapon downward.

"Don't fire!" I entreated. "The prisoners are unarmed and cannot harm you."

He wore a Russian sailor's cap, with the yellow and black striped band, but his pockmarked face was unmistakably Roumanian. He replied in that language:

"Who can tell? Besides, they must come on board."

"They will come—only don't fire!"

He turned away. At this second B. seized my arm. I saw he grasped his valise firmly.

"Ethel, what in Heaven's name are you doing?" he exclaimed, and drew me rapidly towards a brick warehouse on the dock, where, sheltered by an empty sentry-box, we were isolated for a minute. He urged me impassionedly to return home. A carriage was passing, the driver lashing his horse. Dropping his bag, B. put his hand on the animal's bridle and forced me in the vehicle. The driver had not time to continue his route before seven or eight of the Reds espied us. General Vivesco stood near—they rushed towards him and B. with lowered bayonets. I saw the General was touched by one, but he did not flinch. As they were being forced towards the gang-plank I sprang from the carriage, quite unreasoning—my only idea was to cling

to B. He saw me, and putting out his hand, clasped mine an instant.

"Be quite tranquil—my life is more valuable to the Bolsheviki than my death. I will surely return. Promise you will go home at once—you are forgetting the children!"

Women and children were shrieking, some of the prisoners trying to escape, frightened horses stampeding.

My thoughts now turned to Colonel Boyle. I looked about me. Where I left him, there I found him. Forced by the weight of numbers to one side of the gang-plank, he was now standing quietly a few inches from it.

"What are you going to do now?" I asked him.

He looked at me; then our eyes turned instinctively towards the deck. We saw two sailors beating a white-haired man on the back with the butts of their guns. B. had disappeared in the howling crowd of Bolsheviki.

"I can't stand for this," he replied. "I'm going with them."

We shook hands. Unarmed though he was, a stranger to me and mine, no shadow of doubt was possible—he was the right man in the right place.

"Go," I said urgently, "or they are all dead men!"

I can see him now mounting the steep incline that led to that ship of horror, and seizing by the scruff of their necks the two wretches who were beating one of "his" prisoners, as he called them. A few seconds later the hawsers were cut, the gang-plank flung down. A band of music on the ship drowned with its blare other sounds of departure.

I was left on the dock . . . alone. . . .

CHAPTER IX

MARCH 1918 (*continued*)

GERMANS TAKE ODESSA—STORIES OF ESCAPED PRISONERS—NEWS
FROM THEODOSIA—INTERVIEW WITH ADMIRAL HOPMAN.

My mind seemed an absolute blank. I cannot remember a single sensation I had at that moment. I did not even think to look if there were any dead or wounded lying on the dock. I found myself walking in the direction of the railway tracks. A droshki some distance away drove slowly towards me. I got in and pointed towards the town. We began to mount the long hill. An auto approached, coming swiftly from the opposite direction, crammed with sailors. The first lucid thought then came to me—perhaps they could prevent the ship from sailing. I got out of the carriage and waved my hand for them to stop, which they did instantly. They were Russians, in a jolly good humour. My appearance seemed to startle them. I tried to speak to them in Roumanian, then French, then English; my few words of Russian were far from adequate to describe the situation. They shook their heads.

“Sprechen-sie Deutsche?”

“Nein, nein!” I shook my head and dejectedly stepped back into the carriage. Passing the Greek Consul’s house a little farther on, I decided to go in there, always urged by the obsession of preventing the Bolsheviki from sailing. Breathlessly I mounted the four flights of service steps to the apartment; the front stairs were

boarded up. The maid who opened the kitchen door took a step back when she saw me ; then, recognizing me, took me compassionately by the arm and led me to where her mistress with several friends was sitting in the drawing-room. The noise of the shooting had attracted the attention of the household. Looking from the windows, they had seen the ship sailing. No words were needed—they realized at once what was the cause of my distraught appearance, though they could not account for my bandaged head. To satisfy me, Madame K. telephoned to the Dutch Consul in charge of British affairs to tell him what had happened. He could only express sympathy—what else could he do ? Mr. Ray, having received orders from his Government, had left the city the night previous to these events. Monsieur M. joined his wife in assurances of friendship and protection. Then the sound of a curious scuffle in the hall came to our ears. One of B.'s fellow-prisoners had escaped ! He was young and active, and had evidently run quickly from some hiding-place in town. He was now under the dining-table, rolled up in the four hanging corners of the cloth, panting with sobbing breaths and whispering unintelligibly. Nothing would induce him to leave his place of refuge.

I felt an intangible air of mystery about the house, as if something were being withheld from me, but, reluctantly convinced that for the moment I must resign hope, I bade Madame K. good-bye and descended to the street. My carriage had disappeared ; I had not paid the driver—it was curious ! However, home was near. As I walked along the streets I realized that everything was quiet ; I was the only living soul visible. Iron shutters were fastened tightly, shops closed. I seemed to be alone in a city of the dead, but so preoccupied was I with my thoughts that the circumstance hardly surprised me. On entering the apartment I was welcomed with a cry of joy ; poor Christine sobbed with relief.

"Oh," she cried, "what a load is lifted from my heart ! But what has happened to Domnul ?"

I looked into the nursery. Barbu and Sybil were playing hospital, and so absorbed in bandaging their dolls, they hardly turned aside from their game to give me a fleeting glance.

"Come and bring some candies to the hospital !" they cried.

In the drawing-room the Roumanian aviator who had brought Colonel Boyle to Odessa was waiting. He had had instructions to fill his tank with benzine and wait at the aviation field, for, like a prudent man, the Colonel wished to be ready for a prompt retreat should his projects fail. The young officer had been unable to procure more than a small quantity of benzine, not nearly enough for the flight to Jassy. From the aviation field he had seen a sight which made him uneasy—a limousine, bearing a white flag, and within it four Germans, unmistakable by their uniforms. As he related this, Mitru, standing near, broke in eagerly :

"An hour ago that auto stopped opposite our door—the Germans got out and went into the Duma (City Hall). No one was about outside. I looked all the time from the window. They stayed about fifteen minutes, then reappeared, and making a wide, sweeping circle, went at lightning speed towards the station."

We consulted anxiously, the Captain and myself. Finally he said :

"With what benzine I have I can get well away from Odessa. After that I can walk, if need be, to Jassy. The Germans will be some hours taking formal possession of the town. Write some letters for me to take with me ; I will endeavour to see two or three friends in the meantime and return here for them."

I sat down without delay and wrote, I know not what, of imploring prayers to M. Bratiano ; also a letter to

Sir George Barclay, the British Minister, to tell him of Colonel Boyle's fate. When the Captain returned, I tried to thank him: I opened my mouth—not a sound came. My voice was gone. I was stiff and sore all over—impossible to move my head an inch; it seemed in a vice.

"You have taken cold—there is a bitter wind to-day and you wore no coat," he commented.

I had felt neither heat nor cold, wind nor sun.

"The Commander will never be outwitted by the Bolsheviki—you will see he will find means to escape," he added, and so left me.

About ten o'clock Mitru came to where I was sitting close to the children's cots—incapable of exerting myself to shake off the lethargy which had fallen upon me after the aviator's departure.

"The Germans are all around the house," he exclaimed.

Opening the shutter cautiously and peering into the darkness, I could see the gleam of helmets and hear the murmur of low voices. I listened intently. A few German words came to my ears. Across the square one could dimly discern rows of shadowy figures. No doubt of it; Odessa was taken, and apparently without a blow being struck in its defence! I don't want even to think again of that night. I felt mentally and physically as if stretched on a rack.

In the morning, about eight, Monsieur K., the Greek Consul, was at the house. Christine roused me from a troubled stupor. He called to me through the door to tell me that a number of the Bolsheviki ships had not disappeared yet, but were riding at anchor out at sea. There seemed to be some parleying between them and the Germans—perhaps they would come back. If there was anything new later, he would come to inform me of it. A husky whisper was all I could produce to thank him. I could not rise—indeed, hardly move a finger—without excruciating pain; but under a doctor's care I recovered completely

in about ten days. The Germans, as allies of the Ukrainians, restored order in Odessa—looting was at an end. In the port three of the Bolskeviki leaders were hanged—I could see the top of the gibbets from my bedroom window. Nothing transpired of what had been the negotiations between the Germans and the fleeing ships; the smoke of the last one faded on the horizon the second day after the Germans' arrival (i.e. March 2nd).

My forlorn companions in misfortune came often to see me; we had sad comfort in each other's company. We learned that in all nine prisoners of the seventy-one had escaped, one being B.'s naval adjutant. The young man had been arrested because of his reputation as a resourceful dare-devil; the idea of the "Battalion of Death" had been to keep an eye on him. At the age of seventeen he had made a journey to Paris on the Orient Express, but not in the ordinary manner of travelling. At the end of the forty-eight hours he was discovered underneath one of the cars, where he had lashed himself, and from where he was withdrawn as black as the proverbial crow, but immensely pleased with his exploit! As a naval lieutenant he was full of practical jokes, but such an amusing, clever boy that he always ended by being forgiven his pranks. After being wounded at the front he had been sent to Odessa, where he was useful and active. In prison he had been a great distraction to the other prisoners, often moving them to laughter by his antics, in spite of their situation. When the firing at the dock began, he was standing beside B. and urged him to try to escape, but B. turned a deaf ear to him; it was as though he were not there. Dropping the suit-case he was holding, he decided to have a try for liberty himself. While running towards the warehouse he saw himself about to be caught and fell face downward, as if dead. One of the Bolskeviki gave him a kick; he lay inert, holding his breath. He was near the droshkis

with their plunging horses, and fearing to be trampled upon, he began to wriggle himself slowly towards the wide-open door of the building, and succeeded in reaching it. Inside, the warehouse was full of barrels of benzine; he managed, being small and slight of stature, to squeeze behind one of them, and gradually worked his way to the back of them all. There he remained until silence followed the tumult. He told me he stayed on his knees with clasped hands, praying hysterically: "Oh God, don't let the Bolsheviks get me!" like a frightened child for what seemed hours. Night came, but still he was too cautious to move. Then the keepers of the warehouse arrived, and aware of the doings of the afternoon, began to search with a light in every corner for fugitives. When he realized that escape was impossible, he pretended to be seized with an epileptic fit, and threw himself about in strange convulsions, uttering the most blood-curdling cries he could produce. The two searchers were seized with alarm, and while one endeavoured to calm him, the other ran off for a *drosliki*, into which they carried him and transported him rapidly to the nearest hospital, where they delivered him over to a doctor. As soon as his captors had gone he "came to," and told the physician it was only a trick. However, so well had he feigned the fit that the doctor would not let him leave the hospital, and kept him under strict observation for several days.

Once free, the young man came directly to me. Rage and sorrow filled his heart at the thought of B.'s situation. He had an acquaintance who was a member of the old Russian Secret Police, and begged me to consult with him, for he felt sure that through his intervention we could ascertain just in what port the Bolsheviks had taken refuge with the prisoners. My own conviction was that the ship, Bolsheviks, prisoners and Colonel Boyle had been blown up by the mines so thickly strewn at the entrance

of every port in the Black Sea. Eager, however, to snatch at any straw, I consented to consult his friend, asking a brother officer of B.'s to be present at the interview. When the time arrived, I was startled to find this Russian police agent resembled most exactly illustrations one has seen in books about Sherlock Holmes. It was such an extraordinary thing that it seemed absolutely uncanny. I felt as if in an "Alice-in-Wonderland" dream, quite doubting my eyes. Gospodim Z. spoke French fluently and seemed an intelligent and cultured man. We discussed the subject in every aspect. He seemed to think it possible to find the whereabouts of the ship, but doubted if the prisoners would have confidence in him, were he able to approach them.

The upshot of our afternoon's talk was that he would undertake to put all the wheels he knew in motion for the consideration of fifty thousand roubles. Of course, his scheme, as he outlined it to us, had many obvious shortcomings, but we were living in strange times, and I wanted to leave no stone unturned. Urged by B.'s friend, I decided, however, to wait twenty-four hours before engaging Z. definitely. The wives of the other prisoners were eager to contribute, and the money could easily be obtained, but in the end the majority decided it was madness to attempt such a thing, and the plan was abandoned.

In the meantime we were unmolested by the Germans. The third day after their arrival they had a triumphal "entry." The soldiers, Austrian and German, were lined up, making a double aisle along the whole Pushkinskaiya, from the station to the port, as well as the boulevard and the Deribasskaiya. Each had a twig of evergreen stuck in his helmet. Military music was massed in the square outside the Duma. A photographer placed his cinematograph camera on the balcony of the apartment overhead and took pictures of the troops

marching round and round in a circle, with the Duma as a background. The troops were reviewed by an Austrian Feld-Maréchal, who walked slowly down the aisle formed by the soldiers, saluting smilingly. He carried a gold-headed tasselled cane, probably the official field-marshal's baton. His long green overcoat was partly unbuttoned and displayed the red lining of the open revers, between which were his numerous decorations. Following him came a numerous staff of officers on horseback—the Hungarians picturesque with fur bonnets on their heads and dolmans suspended over their shoulders. "Hoch! Hoch!" shouted the soldiers. The population of Odessa filled the streets, curious but apathetic. I detected no sign of either joy or sorrow in any face passing my window.

That evening some Austrian soldiers on patrol rang at the door and asked permission to shelter themselves in the entrance-hall from the sudden blizzard blowing outside. We consented. In passing in and out of the house during the days following, I saw them often, for they had taken it for granted that they could use the hall as they wished. They rose and saluted politely each time they saw me, and I regarded them attentively—they were mere boys. Their greatcoats were lined with paper, their shoes shoddy and worn; all their equipments of extreme shabbiness.

The shops were reopened, prices more reasonable—Roumanian money was at a premium, the shopkeepers preferring it to the "kerenskis" and Odessa money imposed by the Bolsheviks. For the first time I saw Roumanian paper money printed by the Germans in Bucharest and circulated as legal tender in the occupied part of Roumania.

Gradually news from Jassy began to trickle into the city. We learned with burning indignation of the peace the Germans had so shamefully imposed. The only

consolation to our colony for the desperate strait of Roumania was the ability to leave Russia and return to friends and home. Many began to take advantage of the permission granted, and slowly, with many difficulties, got places on the repatriation trains, disappearing from our ken.

I could not make up my mind to leave while there was any glimmering of a chance to hear news of B. Roumania was only home to me because of him.

One day about noon I was standing at the window, when I recognized a man passing by as a Russian I had often met at the American Consulate—an acquaintance of Mr. Ray, a gentleman who had passed many years in America and regretted he had not remained there. I knew since the Germans' arrival he had taken some position in the Duma. He smiled and made a sign for me to open the window. Leaning out, I greeted him, but he wasted no time on formalities. Hardly pausing, he said :

"Telegrams are coming through from Theodosia, sent by Colonel Boyle. He is alive. The messages have been coming for several days, but do not get any farther than the 'Petrograd.' Can't you do something?"

He passed on rapidly. I knew the Petrograd Hotel was the headquarters of the German staff. I donned my hat and sped to the office of the Spanish Consul, the defender of Roumanian interests since the departure of Mr. Ray. Much astonished at these tidings, M. Mendiutti went at once, attended by the Roumanian Secretary now in his office (the same man who had procured the auto for Colonel Boyle), to ask for an interview with the Austrian Field-Marshal. That haughty personage, after keeping them waiting two hours, disavowed any knowledge of the affair and dismissed them very shortly.

M. Mendiutti, chagrined by this treatment, was disinclined for further investigation. We had become gradually aware that though the Austrians were the

nominal directors in Odessa, the power behind the throne was, as everywhere, German; and that a German, Admiral Hopman, who was in charge of Black Sea affairs, received telegrams, for the wireless stations were manned with his subordinates. Entreated by the relations of the prisoners to be their spokeswoman and intercede with the Admiral, I persuaded M. Mendiutti to go to the "Petrograd" and request an interview. Before these arrangements could be made it was already night—a blustery one at that, sleeting and blowing. M. Mendiutti was shivering with fever, a victim of the "flu." However, fortified with aspirin, he good-heartedly yielded to my pleadings not to delay until morning, and, followed by the fervent good wishes of our friends, we set forth on our mission.

At the "Petrograd" we seemed to enter Germany—the hotel bristled with sentries and soldiers. M. Mendiutti's card produced a favourable impression and we were admitted. He had bargained with me that should the Admiral delay in receiving me, I would not insist, but leave without protest. "A Spaniard must not wait on a German," he declared firmly. Therefore, I was tense with apprehension until a sailor appeared after about five minutes to say that the Admiral would receive the Spanish Consul. "Please tell him a lady in great distress desires to speak to him," I whispered. Presently the same sailor reappeared and conducted me upstairs to the Admiral's apartment.

On entering I saw a tall, broad-shouldered man standing in the middle of the room smoking a cigar. In thinking the matter over, I had decided that I would address him in French as less likely to antagonize him than English. I therefore said: "Bon soir, Amiral!" He looked at me quizzically, and replied in English: "Good evening—you are an Englishwoman, aren't you?"

"Not quite," I stammered. "I come from America."

"Oh, an American—from Baltimore, perhaps?"

"No; but I have often been there, and like it very much."

"So do I. It's many a year since I danced with the pretty girls there when on a cruise to America. I liked America and the Americans very much in those days."

His accent was excellent—not at all the usual disagreeable German way of speaking English. We continued for a few minutes in this strain; then, as if betrayed by pleasant memories into forgetfulness of serious matters, he said abruptly:

"Sit down! What is the object of your visit?"

We seated ourselves on either side of a small table. He politely laid aside his cigar. I told him as lucidly and rapidly as possible my story, speaking in the name of my companions in suffering and misfortune. He listened, at first somewhat cynically, interrupting with questions, then appeared more interested. When I told him of Colonel Boyle going on board the ship, he exclaimed:

"By Jove! I'd like to see that man myself."

"Well," I answered, leaning forward eagerly, "you can; he is alive. Telegrams are coming through. Can't you do something to arrange matters?" M. Mendiutti, who had all this time been sitting quietly in the background, realized (though he speaks no English) that the crucial moment had come. He rose and began most earnestly to plead the cause of the Roumanians. The Admiral listened silently, drumming his fingers lightly on the table. Then, turning to me, he said with a slight smile:

"Which do you prefer—the German or Bolsheviki régime?"

I answered unhesitatingly and sincerely: "The German, of course. Had not your army arrived that night, I would not be here, for you know as well as I do that the city was mapped out in sections by the Bolsheviki, and

not expecting your arrival till the morrow, they hoped to have time to murder the 'bourjoise' in advance of your coming!"

He rang the bell and requested to have his Secretary sent in.

"We will look over the telegrams," he remarked. The portfolio was brought. He turned over a mass of papers and found the one I referred to—a mutilated telegram signed by Colonel Boyle, asking permission to land with the Roumanian prisoners in Odessa.

"You see the Bolsheviki are willing to let them return," I said, when he had read it aloud.

"All I can do is to telegraph to Maréchal Mackensen to-night, asking his instructions. Is there anything you would like to say?"

Taken unprepared by this question, I replied that I was sure he could arrange the matter perfectly, and took leave of him, with a hopeful heart. I never dreamed I would hold out a willing hand to a German. Life is full of surprises!

Two days later (March 27th) M. Mendicutti, still far from well, brought me a message from Admiral Hopman. "The Admiral sends you his compliments and congratulations," he said. "General Mackensen has given permission for the prisoners to be brought to Sulina; he cannot allow a landing on Odessa. Telegrams have been exchanged with Sebastopol, where the prisoners are at present with Colonel Boyle. He trusts that you will soon see your husband alive and well."

We were all filled with joy, at the same time devoured with curiosity to know what had happened to the prisoners. During the next two days the worst storm I had ever witnessed blew over the Black Sea—the waves dashed against the mole with the roar of crashing thunder. I was sick with fear that the ship would perhaps be out in that pitiless tempest.

My energies were now directed towards arrangements to return to Roumania. A group of acquaintances from Galatz were endeavouring to procure a car, and I joined my efforts to theirs. The Austrians requisitioned the whole of our apartment the moment my application was filed, and I had great difficulty in obtaining justice for the Russian who had taken over the remainder of the lease. At last we persuaded the Austrians to moderate their demands to two rooms. Another bad quarter of an hour was passed in connection with the Bolsheviki cook and her husband, who refused to leave the premises, and forced the new-comers to accept their highly paid services, much against the will of the new mistress of the house.

Irritating delays followed. Only by bribing to the extent of fifteen hundred roubles was I able at last to get our baggage to the station and into the train and obtain the actual tickets for our reservations. Commander M., who had come through most surprising adventures and wandered over thousands of miles in escaping from the Bolsheviki, was my neighbour. He took our household in charge for the journey, and proved himself a true comrade of B.'s by his helpfulness. On the anniversary of our wedding-day (March 27th) my mental agony was at an end, for a messenger had come with a pencilled note from B.—alive, well, and at Sulina! It seemed unbelievable that he had survived. We left Odessa on the morning of March 30th.

CHAPTER X

APRIL 1918

EN ROUTE FOR GALATZ—INCIDENTS OF THE ROAD—RETURNED
PRISONERS RELATE THEIR ADVENTURES.

IN spite of precautions, it was a fight to get into our train, but we were a large party, and the struggle was ended quickly, to our advantage. A sergeant, the ever faithful Constantinesco, and four soldiers were attached to our group. Mitru was with us, too, overjoyed to leave Russia, to which he has sworn eternal enmity. The sergeant had Colonel Boyle's dispatch-bag slung over his shoulder, and in his hand a valise, also the Colonel's property, entrusted to our care by Captain Sehrantchenko, who was delighted to have the opportunity of returning them to their rightful owner.

With what rejoicing we set forth—everyone disposed to forget the disagreeable past in the hope of a more secure future! The train went on peacefully, if slowly, for several hours, stopping occasionally, and then came to a standstill. As the stoppage was prolonged and no station in sight, some of the men of the party went to see what was the matter. The engine-driver was dozing calmly in the engine-cab. Aroused by the indignant exclamations of the passengers, he declared that he was going no farther. "Why not?" "Oh, he was tired of engine-driving—all men were equal now—why should he work?" He wanted to enter into a

discussion on the merits of Bolshevism. Feeling some wine might prove a powerful argument in inducing him to proceed, Commander M. requested the passengers to furnish it, but none had any. We therefore put our resources together : five hundred roubles were subscribed, which, when handed to the champion of the rights of man, had the desired effect, and we breathed freely once more.

About three o'clock the so-called boundary was reached. This was the last village under Ukrainian rule ; the next village was Roumanian territory, and five miles distant. Though the whole country had been conquered, so to speak, by the Germans, they evidently were unable to govern more than the city of Odessa—chaos reigned outside.

Here once more the train stopped ; the engine detached itself. Our friend, Commander M., went into the station, and after a violent altercation with the Ukrainian officials, came back to tell us that they refused absolutely to allow the locomotive to proceed, because on previous days, when the repatriation trains were passing, the Roumanians had not returned their engines, and they feared shortly to be left without any. If the Roumanians wanted to get home, let them get an engine of their own. Here was a pretty situation ! The Commander decided to get a cart and drive over to the next village, hoping to persuade his compatriots to send an engine to haul the train over. Relying implicitly on his *savoir faire*, we resigned ourselves to a weary patience until his return.

While taking a few turns on the station platform, I suddenly encountered an officer in the familiar Roumanian uniform. Rushing forward, he exclaimed : " How do you do ? Don't you remember me ? " I confessed I did not.

" I was a prisoner with the Commander, but managed to escape and walked to Jassy in disguise. Now I have been sent as a Roumanian liaison officer to this village,

and just arrived this morning. Can I do anything for you ? ”

“ Yes,” I replied, “ you can get us an engine.”

When he learned of our serio-comic adventure, he declared he would arrange everything speedily. The result of the *pourparlers* was that he actually did get an engine on promising on his most solemn word of honour he would return with it at once. However, the train itself was not allowed to go on, and we were obliged to remove our bags and baggage from it and install ourselves in cattle cars, the floors of which were strewn with straw. The roofs had large holes cut in them for air and light to enter. Some of our elderly travelling companions had much difficulty in hauling themselves up into these sumptuous cars.

At last we were off ! The engine was heated by wood—the flying sparks by hundreds fell through the openings in the roof and ignited the dry straw continually. I was so distracted by my anxiety that an unnoticed spark would set everything ablaze, that I gave very indifferent attention to our amiable rescuer, as he volubly recounted to me his wanderings and sufferings since he had last seen me. In fact, I cannot recall now anything but the vaguest outline of his story. Half an hour seemed a century, but it was over at last. In the Roumanian station (Bender) we found Commander M. on the point of mounting the locomotive he had obtained from the authorities to fetch us. So far, so good ! No chance was in sight of going farther that night. The one hotel was jammed to the roof, so was the station waiting-room. It was now eight o'clock. Our conductor bade us farewell, and mounting his engine, departed on the return journey. Barbu looked about the crowded, smoky room with distaste.

“ Where's bed ? ” he demanded. “ Barbu wants to go home ! ”

Sybilica was already blissfully slumbering. Tired and decidedly cross, I turned to Commander M. and demanded most unreasonably that he find us somewhere to sleep. "B. always manages to make us comfortable," I assured him.

Quite downcast at my implied reproach, he went off. When he came back after a quarter of an hour or so, I was more philosophically inclined, and with Christine's aid had made up a bed for the children on the bench against the wall of the restaurant. The Commander had good news. He had found a postal car on a side track, dark and empty, and calling our band of sailors to his aid, he had forced open the door and taken possession. Daring microbes and preferring solitude and quiet to the noisy restaurant, we conveyed ourselves, the sleeping children and luggage to this refuge. The whole party, ten in all, got in. The sailors took up their residence in the half of the car where the postal bags were evidently kept; while Christine, the children, the Commander and myself disposed ourselves on the seats in the other half, partitioned off for the travelling postal agents. Our rugs came in handy, for the dampness and cold made our teeth chatter. During the night the children slid several times to the floor from their narrow benches—luckily with pillow and blankets, so they were unhurt. The rest of us dozed off at intervals.

Dawn found us astir, but the entire morning passed before we could obtain any information as to when there would be a train for Galatz. At the last moment there was a scramble, when we discovered it on the point of pulling out without us. During the second part of the journey we were much more comfortable, having seats on the bare springs of a comparatively clean sleeping-car.

The following afternoon we arrived at Reni. The Bessarabian country through which we passed was most attractive—gently rolling plains, green with young wheat.

In one village, called Trajan's Wall, I was interested to see a crumbling vestige of the famous wall of antiquity. One peculiar feature of the country-side was that I saw not a single road—only dirt tracks or ruts, where I presume carts usually pass. Large flocks of white geese were an agreeable sight to one accustomed now to regard these birds as creatures of legend.

At Reni the broad-gauge tracks of the Russian railway end. Again we were obliged to transfer ourselves and belongings to another train. Many hours and roubles slipped away before fresh cars were obtained and heavy trunks safely in them. On again; and at last, about five on the third day of our Odyssey, we found ourselves here—Olga and Alexandre, all smiles and cordial greetings, at the station to meet us!

STRADA LAPUSHNEANO, APRIL 18TH.

Through the kindness of an old bachelor friend, we have been lent this Lilliputian house, composed of three rooms, one opening out of the other, with the kitchen and servants' quarters on the other side of the courtyard. The day we arrived I found a letter from B., who was in Jassy, and at once, when he knew of our arrival, came down; thus we were together for Easter. Our reunion can be more easily imagined than described.

Three of Colonel Boyle's prisoners live in Galatz, and I have pieced together an account of the party's wanderings from their reports and a few details given me by B. When the *Imperator Trajan* left the dock in Odessa and got out to sea, the excitement of the Bolsheviki abated. Colonel Boyle stood on the deck, and all the prisoners were finally grouped about him. He saw that nine were missing, and their friends on board were of the opinion that they had been killed, although in reality, as far as I have ever been able to find out, only two Russians were victims of the shooting.

The ship was commanded by two captains—one a Russian, the other a Roumanian; and among the thousand Bolsheviki crowded on board, the number of each nationality was about equal. These captains assigned a cabin to the prisoners, where they were herded together, with no place to lie down and sleep. What rest they got was by leaning the head against a neighbour's shoulder. Their baggage (hand-bags—some had been abandoned in the struggle) was minutely examined, and most of the contents removed. Colonel Boyle was offered a cabin to himself, but refused to accept any favours. The prisoners were grateful for his presence, feeling he was a tower of strength to them. For three days they were guarded thus. The sea was running high and many were miserable. At irregular intervals some tinned cabbage was thrown into the cabin, as one would throw food to dogs. By dint of hammering and prying open with penknives, the tins were opened. Once or twice tea was served them with sugar so dirty and black they dared not use it.

They entered several ports, but were not allowed to land. At length, the third day, the engines stopped; they were in the harbour of Theodosia—a small port on the north shore of the Black Sea, beyond the Crimea. They were ordered to leave the ship. Colonel Boyle accompanied them. Surrounded by guards, they marched through the town. A street fight was going on between the Bolsheviki and the residents of Theodosia, who were opposed to them. Bullets were whistling through the air; crossing a square, the guards lost their nerve and fled. Most of the prisoners fell on their faces and crawled to places of shelter behind garden walls. When the tide of battle rolled away, the guards returned, rounded them up and marched them to a sanatorium on the outskirts of the town. Here Chinese International soldiers were stationed, who took them in charge. The sanatorium,

so called, had been used as a cholera hospital. There were a number of beds without mattresses or bedding. Straw was brought from the courtyard and strewn on the floor, where most of the prisoners were forced to sleep. Remaining roubles concealed in their clothing were now very useful to the unfortunates; as but little unsavoury food was provided, they were glad to be able to purchase extra bread, which was permitted, the guards willingly sharing it with them. To while away the weary hours they washed their own linen. Colonel Boyle, of course, had nothing extra, and went about barefooted while his solitary pair of socks were drying. B., with his tea-basket, was the most popular of the party. He also had a pack of cards. (He brought them home—they were worn to the thinness of tissue-paper, the figures being undecipherable.)

The British Vice-Consul (a Greek merchant) in Theodosia, informed of Colonel Boyle being with the prisoners, assisted him in his efforts to plan an escape. One afternoon he sent a messenger to call the Colonel to his office most urgently, and though he had not yet quitted his flock even for an hour, the gravity of the message decided him to go into town at once. Advising the prisoners to prepare for a quick departure in such a way as not to arouse the suspicion of the guards, he went off, leaving them in a most anxious frame of mind.

Some hours passed, dusk came on—still he did not reappear. Suddenly a sound of marching feet was heard. A detachment of twenty well-armed men entered the courtyard, taking the Chinese unawares and quickly seizing them. Colonel Boyle was one of the new arrivals; he at once commanded the prisoners to fall into ranks of four and march double-quick to the port, where he told them he had a ship engaged to take them out to sea. Not a moment was to be lost, as the naval Bolsheviks were determined to do away with them that very night.

Two of their number, betraying their comrades with whom they had quarrelled, had warned the Vice-Consul. Nonplussed by the obstinacy of Colonel Boyle, weary of the whole situation and despairing of ever being able to return to their native shores, the majority of those on board the *Imperator Trajan* had resolved to put the prisoners and their protector in a munition deposit shed and then blow up the place. It would appear an accident—no inquiries would be made and a source of irritation and expense be thus simply removed!

Ten of the guards engaged by Colonel Boyle went first, the prisoners following, the rear guard being formed by the remaining ten Chinese. Rapidly the procession moved through side streets and alleys—not a moment too soon they got on board the *Chernomor*. Just as they were about to sail, two of the Bolsheviks from the *Imperator Trajan*, who had got wind of the escape, came running breathlessly to the spot.

"We want to parley with Colonel Boyle," they cried. The Colonel requested B. (who acted as his interpreter, being the only one of the prisoners who spoke English) to invite them on board. No sooner were they safely in the cabin than the ship was backed away from the dock. Loud were their protestations, but of no avail. A few stray cannon shots from the town were fired after them, but no harm was done.

The *Chernomor* was a miserable, leaky tub, but had coal enough on board to get them to Sebastopol. B. told me he was amazed that the Greek Captain had agreed to leave port with her, even for the very considerable sum (one hundred and fifty thousand roubles) Colonel Boyle had paid him for the attempt. At Sebastopol was the headquarters of the "Centru Flotte," the most important Soviet of the Black Sea, to which all the sailors of the region bore allegiance. Once there (March 10th), Colonel Boyle, who was known to the local Bolsheviks, having

had negotiations with them before, obtained attention and consideration. After several interviews with the Soviet, in which a one-legged man named Spiro (formerly a shoemaker, now Chief Commander of the Bolsheviki Navy) played a prominent rôle, the Soviet upheld the decision of the Odessa Soviet, declared that the prisoners belonged legally to Colonel Boyle, and that the sailors of the *Imperator Trajan* were enemies of the Revolution and traitors. Colonel Boyle now inspired in them a burning desire to get their four hundred martyrs suffering in Roumania back to their native land. The only way to do this would be to allow him to return with the Roumanian hostages and effect the exchange. By wireless they flashed telegrams to Odessa under his directions. When the favourable answer was received, the Colonel and his band of prisoners, greatly rejoicing, set forth again in the *Chernomor* for Sulina.

Hardly were they a day's sail from Sebastopol than a tempest began to rage. They were obliged to seek shelter in Ecaterinaburg, where the wind prevented them from leaving port for forty-eight hours. The Soviet of Ecaterinaburg were not of the same opinion as the Soviet of Sebastopol, and made many difficulties before they permitted the boat to leave; then the captain of the *Chernomor* elected to sail as near to the shore as he could for the rest of the journey to Sulina. B. told me that to him the last twelve hours were the worst of the whole trip, as he knew how thickly the mines were placed, but he could not persuade the captain to take a safer course.

At length Sulina was reached. The Austrian flag flew on all the buildings. They were allowed to come alongside the quay but not to land. Colonel Boyle told the Austrians of Mackensen's permission and promise. Evidently the relations between them and the Germans were not of the best, for it was only after two days' telegraphing and acrimonious disputes that the apparently

unwearied Colonel Boyle was enabled to see the four hundred Russians marched on board and wave a cordial good-bye to the captain as the *Chernomor*, flying the red revolutionary flag, set forth once more to sea.

A ship sent from Galatz then bore him and his repatriated, shaved, brushed and jubilant party up the river. At Galatz a special train was waiting, and when it drew up to the station at Jassy, delegates from the King and Parliament were on the platform to welcome the Colonel. Relations of the prisoners and numerous friends had heard of the arrival; not only the station but the streets were thronged with a cheering crowd. People had given up the prisoners and their saviour for dead—the series of miracles by which they were saved will pass into legend.

The next day, March 25th, Colonel Boyle lunched at the Palace. The Queen, with her own hand, decorated him with the Star of Roumania. When B. had an audience with the King, he told me His Majesty bade him omit not even the tiniest incident of their wanderings, exclaiming again and again: "Extraordinary! Extraordinary!"

I asked B. how it was that all the prisoners got back alive. I knew some of them had had chronic ailments for years and many were elderly. He laughed and said:

"They just had to live—the Colonel had sworn to bring them back alive, and they dared not even look ill!"

Heroic treatment evidently agrees with invalids—sometimes!

Later.

Galatz has greatly changed since we left it two years ago. Bombardment by long distance cannon has destroyed the Commission palace: the Convent of Notre Dame de Sion has been seriously damaged; the blackened ruins of houses give the streets a melancholy air; the shops are mostly empty—everyone shabbily dressed.

The German officers are not numerous, but very conspicuous, because when they walk on one side of the street the people of Galatz walk on the other; when they sit down at a restaurant table, the four tables surrounding them are left with empty seats. It gives me a malicious pleasure to know they are never invited to any house; where they are quartered, the families avoid encountering them.

CHAPTER XI

JUNE-NOVEMBER 1918

THIEVES—REMOVAL TO JASSY—FURTHER ACCOUNT OF COLONEL
BOYLE—EVERYDAY LIFE IN JASSY—ENDEAVOUR TO RESCUE
THE DOWAGER CZARINA OF RUSSIA FROM THE BOLSHEVIKI.

JUNE.

THE headquarters of the Government is still at Jassy, and B. has returned there to his post as Director of the Navy. He has been officially congratulated on his conduct in Odessa; it is a satisfaction to know his unceasing labours have been appreciated. Fortunately, he has no personal contact with the Germans, who have established themselves all over the country. Their rapacious snatching at the remaining resources in Roumania is a proof of the terrible lack of necessities in their own homes. Here in Galatz they are buying all the soap, clothing and food they can lay their hands on, and forcing up the prices still higher for the rest of us.

Coal, oil and candles have become luxuries; the gas-works have ceased to supply the city for over a year. Many friends are busily engaged in making summer frocks out of sheets and pillow-cases and even of hospital gauze. For shoes, no leather is procurable; to resole, pieces of old automobile tyres are used. As the children have outgrown their shoes, I went to a shoemaker, who proposed an original combination, which has proved satisfactory. I supplied him with eardboard, out of

which he cut the soles. To these he sewed thin clothes-line in close rows, round and round. The tops he cut from a piece of sail-cloth; the heels are soft wood, whittled with a penknife and covered with the same cloth as the tops of the shoes. The whole effect is very neat—so much so that I have ordered a pair of black velvet slippers for myself, to wear in the house, as they will save my others. They cost twenty-five lei (five dollars) for the making.

Bartering food—exchanging cheese for eggs or milk, and so forth—is the fashionable distraction. In spite of household difficulties, however, Galatz is still the hospitable place I remember, and I am enjoying renewing old acquaintances.

JASSY, AUGUST.

We have had remarkably good luck and are quite comfortable here. The house is in the same neighbourhood as our former abode, and has a pleasant, shady garden. We have two large rooms, and as our proprietor's family consists of only three persons, he allows us to share the kitchen and the cook, which is an immense advantage. We have also engaged an extra maid, as in confined quarters there is always so much to be done, but by careful planning we manage to have nourishing food nicely served in our parlour-bed-dining-sitting-room! A couple of screens are arranged to change the character of the room according to the circumstances! Hearing of my successful sales in Odessa, a friend in Galatz has sent me a trunkful of party gowns with the request to sell them for her. I have succeeded in disposing of most of them at very high prices, more than they cost three years ago—a proof that there must be a good deal of gaiety in spite of the state of the country. Miss C., our new governess, is a valuable addition to the family—it is pleasant to hear English spoken all the time.

On arriving in Jassy I hoped to see Colonel Boyle, but heard instead the sad news that he had had a slight paralytic stroke at Kishenev, in Bessarabia. Since, we hear he is recovering. B. has been for two weeks inspecting ships on the Dneister. He tells me prices are even higher there than here. Tea is sold for eight hundred roubles the kilo; coffee at the same figure, when obtainable.

Elections of a kind better not investigated have taken place, and M. Margiloman is now Premier; and with him the Ministers, Senators and Deputés who favoured neutrality are sitting in Parliament in the Opera House here. I have been several times in one of the boxes to listen to the debates, and was delighted to find that, in spite of our deplorable situation, a number of Liberals had been elected under the Germans' very noses, and that these were very spirited in their speeches and opposition to different measures brought forward unfavourable to Roumania's interests.

I have met the American Y.M.C.A. workers, and find them wide-awake and energetic. They have amassed a considerable store of provisions, which they are dispensing to those who need them the most.

Vague reports are coming through from the occupied territory. There is an "Agony Column" in the newspapers. No letters are allowed to pass, and separated families are trying to get news by inserting advertisements. We hear that the Admiral is alive and well, though he has suffered greatly, as have all those who remained in Bucharest. Trestinik, the family estate, has been pillaged—to what extent it is impossible to learn until an inventory has been made.

SEPTEMBER.

B. has put up a huge map of Eastern Europe on the wall, and every night we look with a magnifying-glass

for the villages mentioned in the dispatches. Since the arrival of Franchet d'Esperey at Salonica, it is incredible how lively things have become on that front.

Colonel Boyle has completely recovered, and when I knew we were to meet in ordinary everyday life, I tried to think of something I could say to express my gratitude and admiration. When we did meet, however, I found myself tongue-tied. He is a silent man, so we just shook hands and smiled at each other, then spoke of indifferent things. B. asked him to show me the illuminated address presented to him by the families of the prisoners he had rescued. It is really a beautiful thing, with four exquisite water-colours bound with it. Written in English and Roumanian, it ends with the words: "God bless Canada and her noble son."

People ask me, when speaking of their wonder at his prodigious exploits: "Are all Canadians like Colonel Boyle?"

"Of course," I reply, "if given his opportunities."

I met S. B., one of the prisoners, in the street the other day; he told me that B. had saved his reason. "I would have gone mad in that unspeakable Theodosia, if it had not been for him," he said. B. can never be induced to go into details about that terrible time.

Since our return we have heard a good deal about Colonel Boyle. It seems he brought a machine gun unit to England from the Yukon at the beginning of the war, but on account of his being over the age-limit he was not allowed to go to France, whither the unit was sent, and where it did good work on the Marne. Later he was appointed a member of the British Transport Mission to Russia, his section for the reorganization being the Moscow region. While in Moscow he came in contact with the Roumanians, and pitying their sad, helpless condition, did all he could (and it was a good deal) to forward provisions and munitions to Jassy.

Finding the Bolsheviks more and more antagonistic, the Roumanians, who had sent their national treasury to Moscow at the time of invasion, wished to bring it back to Jassy, and were much embarrassed to find the means of doing so. Colonel Boyle undertook the task. With his credentials he obtained a train and ordered the cases containing bank-notes, securities and valuable papers to be put on board. This done, he left Moscow with the train, accompanied by two British officers. Whatever other difficulties they encountered I do not know; but towards dusk the second day of their journey they reached a small station, where the train stopped for an unduly long time. Colonel Boyle descended and looked about him. Behind, to the far horizon, a dreadful scene met his eyes—flames and smoke from burning farm-houses, set on fire by the Bolsheviks, were mounting to the sky. Intermittent shooting could be heard, now approaching, now retreating. Turning his attention to the station itself, he saw that the platform was empty, the engine deserted by its driver and fireman. Investigating in the station-house, he found half a dozen men in different stages of drunkenness—some snoring peacefully on the floor. The two other Britishers had followed him. Turning to them, the Colonel at length commented:

“The engine-driver has disappeared—we can’t go back”—looking significantly in the direction of the pyrotechnic display. They assented. “It doesn’t seem very attractive to stay here!” was the next remark. Again they assented. “Let’s go on,” he suggested. “Have you ever driven an engine?” they asked. “No, but I don’t see why I shouldn’t begin now,” was the answer.

They mounted the engine-cab—found the fire dying out, the boiler empty. After filling it by emptying small pailfuls of water drawn from a neighbouring tap, they succeeded in setting the machine in motion. Without

signals these amateur engine-drivers proceeded slowly on their way—apparently unnoticed at the stations they passed. They met no trains, and after some hours halted in a quiet spot. One of them (Captain Hill, of the 4th Manchester Regiment) cautiously reconnoitred. Guided by a light gleaming from a window, he approached a house and knocked at the door. Inquiry revealed the fact that the train was near the Roumanian frontier—in fact, within easy walking distance. Led by the friendly cottagers to the nearest Roumanian station, he brought a train crew to the spot where his companions were waiting, and they soon found themselves on Roumanian territory. It was for this feat that Colonel Boyle had been decorated with the medal I noticed when I first saw him. While in Jassy he had heard of our desperate situation in Odessa and volunteered to attempt our rescue.

Later.

The thought of spending the winter here is a wearisome one. The weather continues very fine and warm, but the problem of heating our rooms all winter is yet unsolved and uppermost in our mind. Much of my time goes in mending, as our garments and linen are getting very threadbare. Some English soldiers' shirts have been sold to officers, and from our purchase of half a dozen the children's winter clothes are to be made. A piece of scarlet cloth, used for the cavalry in peacetimes, will make me a brilliant house-gown. All the dyeing establishments are closed, so to change the bright hue of it is out of the question. In order to economize soap and worn vestiges of flannels which need delicate handling, Miss C. and I wash out a few articles each day in our hand basins and hang them on a string near the stove to dry. We boast of our ingenuity and expedients, but I find all our friends are just as clever.

For services rendered, such as shoe-repairing and dress-making, the workers refuse money and will only undertake work for those who can pay in food or clothing. Forced proximity to uncongenial strangers and the long struggle with difficulties unheard of before the war has ruffled the most placid dispositions. Our landlady finds it as hard to reconcile herself to our presence as we find it to share her house, for our modes of life are incompatible. Spanish influenza is making havoc in every quarter of the town. All her family connection has been ill, her daughter included, and our immunity until the present seems to be an added source of irritation.

On the whole, the aspect of the town is less miserable than during our last stay. Incontestably the bright autumn weather is a factor in making things look more cheerful. Jassy is beautifully situated—embosomed among wooded hills, traversed by a wide valley and adorned with many historic shrines.

NOVEMBER 1ST.

A week ago Colonel Boyle came to see us. The object of his visit was to ask my husband to aid him to carry out his plan to bring the Dowager Czarina of Russia to Roumania. King Ferdinand was most anxious to get the Czarina away from the Bolsheviki, and Colonel Boyle volunteered to undertake the perilous mission if B. would co-operate with him, which he was more than ready to do when he learned of the project. Through secret agents the whereabouts of the Empress had been ascertained—she was in the Crimea, near Yalta. The only way to reach her would be by sea, and it was necessary to organize a naval expedition to sail from the mouth of the Danube.

The Black Sea is full of floating uncharted mines, but this is one of the least of their preoccupations. In order to go at all, oil will be needed for the ship's engines ;

a picked crew; two hundred soldiers, munitions, guns, mitrailleuses; an abundant supply of food; and last but not least, plenty of wine to entertain the Bolsheviki is essential. How to assemble these is a difficult problem to solve, but Colonel Boyle's energy and resource are more than equal to the task, and he will have the aid and goodwill of all—from the Prime Minister, who has lent him his auto with which to convey the Czarina to the ship when located, to the humblest sailor eager to go on the expedition.

It was with a heavy heart I saw them leave for Galatz, where they will set to work. At the last minute, Colonel Boyle came to take leave of me. When he saw me with the children, a thought of the dangers to be encountered struck him. Turning to B., he said: "You will have done all you can before we leave Sulina—I'll go on from there alone!"

I saw the cloud on B.'s face, and hastened to say how disappointed I would be should he not have his share in such an interesting expedition, expressing my doubts as to any other naval man being so well fitted to go. I went out on the balcony to wave them good-bye. Colonel Boyle's massive figure and slow, deliberate carriage were a remarkable contrast to B.'s eager, alert step and slenderness. My thoughts had taken a nautical turn—they reminded me of a dreadnought and a light cruiser—a good combination for the affair in hand.

NOVEMBER 8TH.

No news of B. since the ship sailed from Sulina. At last, after long, weary delays and disappointments, we have been notified that we can return to Bucharest. Trains are being organized, as at the evacuation two years ago; and we will have our places in the Ministry of War train. Madame Mihail and I will be together again, but with what different feelings! How thankful I shall

be to have my own home again ! I wonder if the Germans have left us anything. I shall not leave any provisions behind or a piece of wood, so that we will not be destitute at first, anyway.

NOVEMBER 12TH.

The Armistice was signed yesterday—what a blessing is the absolute certainty of peace ! They say there is not a single German left in Jassy, and that the few remaining in Bueharest have had an ignominious departure, followed by the jeers of the crowd. They will not be regretted by those they treated so arrogantly during the occupation. Everyone has a sensation of waking after a long, horrible nightmare. We are diligently packing up the relics of our baggage and economizing our stores. We will probably not know when our section will be leaving until a few hours before the actual moment of departure. As always, the N.D. is full of courtesy and helpfulness to us in our preparations.

NOVEMBER 25TH.

It has been such an anxious time without news of B. At last I have a telegram from Galatz ; he will be home to-morrow. What news will he bring ?

NOVEMBER 27TH.

It took most of the night to hear the story of the trip. At Yalta, when the ship approached the port, the whole population of the town was at the dock—a ship had not come there for months and months. While B. entertained the appreciative Bolsheviks at a copious supper, explaining the ship's arrival by every motive but the real one, Colonel Boyle with his auto, guided by a trusty Russian, drove quickly out into the country where, after some searching, he found the house, a modest villa, where the Czarina was staying. She was comforted in her sad

situation by a few stanch friends and servants, among them an Englishwoman, who, by a curious coincidence, was named Miss Dane. The attire of the whole suite was of extreme shabbiness—one of the officers even had a large patch on his boot.

The Czarina was deeply touched when she learned of the mission Colonel Boyle had come upon, but refused to leave Russia.

"I am an old woman now," she said; "my life is nearly over. Here I am able to help in organizing some resistance to the Bolsheviks. You cannot take with you all those who have sacrificed everything for me and my family. I cannot abandon them."

Rumours of British warships coming through the Dardanelles gave her hope. She clung to the belief that her son was alive. Colonel Boyle was loath to leave her, and asked her to reflect for twenty-four hours, promising to return for her answer. She was treated with suspicion by the Bolsheviks, but her dignity and simplicity forced their respect. Everyone had cards for a certain amount of sugar a month. In signing her first one, the Czarina put her name "Marie." The Bolshevik official was not content.

"Marie who?" he asked.

"I have been signing 'Marie' for fifty years; if it is not sufficient, I can do without the sugar," was her spirited reply.

B. was very anxious when he heard of the delay, fearing his stock of catables and drinkables would not last out at the rate the *tovarishi* were consuming them.

The next day Colonel Boyle went to see the Czarina again, accompanied by two companions. She was firm in her refusal, though eloquent in her appreciation of their efforts. She entrusted them with letters for her sister, Queen Alexandra, and King Ferdinand. She was a picture of dignified, beautiful old age, this intrepid

woman of seventy, as she bade them farewell. The others kissed her hand ; Colonel Boyle wrung it in his, as if she were a man and a comrade.

They left the port as quickly as they could. On their return journey they saw a ship in the distance, and at length discerned the naval jack. It was Admiral Calthorpe's flagship, the first through the Dardanelles, which gave them the news of the Armistice, declared during their absence from Roumania. Returning with the Admiral to Yalta, Colonel Boyle left the Czarina in his charge, and B. presented him with all the guns and munitions he had brought from Roumania. The Bolsheviki seemed much subdued !

The return journey was not devoid of excitement and peril, on account of stormy seas. This exploit proves to have been not the least picturesque of the war, from our personal point of view—and I hope from the bottom of my heart the last !

CHAPTER XII

DECEMBER 1918-MARCH 1919

OUR CARAVAN—IN BUCHAREST AGAIN—STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE—
DEPARTURE—PARIS.

DECEMBER 1ST.

JUST ten days ago we left Jassy. About half-past six on the day of departure, B. went down to the station, promising to return for us when the train would be ready to leave. When nine o'clock came and no sign of him, we put the fretful children to sleep on the bare mattresses. At eleven, Miss C. and I followed their example, much provoked at the prospect of not getting away until tomorrow. Shortly after midnight he reappeared, begging us to prepare quickly to go with him. We scrambled into our outdoor wraps, and were taken swiftly to the station in the N.D. automobile. It was a clear, cold, starry night. How glad I was to leave the bickerings, petty dissensions and discomforts behind, to have the prospect of a home of our own after two years of agitated wandering!

The train was composed partly of third and fourth class German cars, abandoned by the owners when they left, and partly broken-down freight cars. Our reservation was an entire compartment, labelled as standing-room for twenty-two workmen. B. had been preparing it for us days in advance. First it was disinfected and scrubbed. The windows had been entirely destroyed,

but a carpenter repaired the frames, and a window-glass taken from a shed near by was fitted in. Next a small stove was secured and installed, with a couple of lengths of rusty stove-pipe, and two sacks of wood piled in a corner. The largest of the children's cribs was set up before we arrived, and our bundles of pillows and blankets were deposited on the two narrow benches. A coal-oil lamp was fixed to the wall; a tiny toilet-room, exclusively for us, opened off the compartment—altogether, it was an inviting caravan.

B. was commandant in charge of the train, and therefore exceedingly busy. Miss C. and I tucked the now wide-awake children to bed in the crib—they protested loudly at being together. She and I then elaborately arranged ourselves on the narrow benches, preparing a bed for B. on the floor with an old fur rug as a foundation. The orderlies and the cook, who accompanied us, were in another car. I fell into a troubled sleep. B.'s coming roused me—he said probably we could pull out of the station in an hour, and lay down, fully dressed, to snatch a little rest. I went off again. When I awoke it was broad daylight—the train was stationary. Gazing out of the window, I saw the familiar Jassy station—we had not budged an inch!

At one time, the entire provision of fuel for the engine being exhausted, B. had to organize gangs of men to go to a nearby forest, cut down trees and drag the wood to the tracks, where others split it up and piled it on the tender.

During one of the stops I got out of the train and strolled about. I found that the engine was the sorriest looking of its kind—in fact, it needed an effort of imagination to see any resemblance to a locomotive in that rusty, twisted, wheezy mass of iron. They say that thirty of these wrecks are the only locomotives left in Roumania by the Huns. We had the one compartment with whole

panes of glass in the interminably long train. Many cars had none, the openings being boarded up or stuffed with rags and cushions. The cook and her companions had packed themselves in straw to the knees and put every garment they possessed around their heads and shoulders, so frigid was the weather. Many soldiers had gathered up chips and scraps of refuse and lighted fires in pans, by which they warmed their hands or heated a cup of water. The great majority of them were pale and thin, dressed in stained uniforms and with mere fragments of boots on their feet. When the train painfully jerked itself into motion, no one hurried to get aboard, being sure of catching it easily later on. In fact, dozens of men walked beside it for hours, for the sake of keeping themselves warm by the exercise. Such crowding and so prolonged a journey gave easy provocation for quarrels, and B. had to hold an impromptu court of justice in the middle of a field in order to settle some of the more serious disputes among the soldiers.

Bucharest at last—fog, drizzling rain and a chill which struck one to the marrow! There was a great upheaval to get our belongings together and out of the train. The station looked just as we had left it. We had to wait over an hour for carriages to take us to our home, and when we got two, I thought the horses would die in their tracks before we reached Strada Alexandru Lahovary—such grotesque caricatures of animals were the beasts that stumbled along with us.

When we saw the house, we were seized with indefinable emotion. There it was—still scarred from roof to basement by the bombs; the balcony still sustained miraculously by a single beam; General Shaguna's apartment with the windows boarded up. It seemed as if we had left it but yesterday. At the threshold we met the General's housekeeper, who greeted us rapturously and endeavoured to tell us in one breath all that had happened



THE AUTHOR'S HOME IN BUCHAREST AFTER THE BOMBARDMENT.

in our absence. The General and his wife had managed to get away shortly after we had left, and she had had no word of them since. Mounting the stairs, she unlocked our door and we entered the apartment. It was deathly cold and damp—an unpleasant, musty odour assailed our nostrils. Disorder, dirt, rubbish—the sight made me choke with anger.

Warned of our coming, the Admiral had sent some wood to the house a few days previously. The orderlies at once lit a stove in one of the rooms and threw open all the windows in the others. Without removing my hat, I set to work to put some order in the appalling chaos.

The others assisted me energetically. We ran to look in all the rooms—little by little we perceived that quantities of our belongings had disappeared. Furniture was stained, soiled, broken; drawers of bureaux and tables missing; no china, glass, bibelots, linen, pictures, books or brasses left. To our amazement, a number of articles quite strange to us were in every room—carpets, chairs, couches and so forth. The housekeeper told us that from the day of the German occupation the apartment had been requisitioned—a succession of Germans, Austrians and Turks had taken possession. The last occupant had been the German director of the Opera, who had brought a lively actress to live here. This lady, finding the household effects pretty thoroughly demolished, had assembled the unfamiliar articles to fill in.

To make a long story short, the first few days were difficult and strenuous ones. Gradually we were able to get some kind of order and cleanliness to prevail. The cellar was full of empty champagne bottles; every drawer in the house had a few corks in it. Fourteen trouser-stretchers, all marked with the same name, were a curious silent comment on the German occupation.

In the meanwhile we have had great trouble to get

wood—have been obliged to close all but two rooms. We are inured to such a life, and bear it more philosophically because we are at home and alone. The market is ill supplied and everything in the way of food at prohibitive prices. Thread sells for two lei (forty cents) a yard. Many are unravelling lace to mend their clothing. Stockings and new shoes are unprocurable. B. was offered a thousand lei for a pair of patent-leather boots he had had made three years ago. Most of the shops are closed. We are exceptionally fortunate in that we have friends who know of places and ways to obtain food and share their knowledge with us. Everyone is full of hope for the future, in spite of the frightful loss of life and property with which these two disastrous years have overshadowed the country. The war has certainly brought everyone close together; community of suffering has made each class more understanding towards the others. The new agrarian laws are drastic and will be upsetting for a while, but the hour has struck for the old order of things; even the most selfish landlord cannot but realize that it is wiser to give the peasant a larger share of land and responsibility than to run the risk of Bolshevism.

Later.

We are now burning dried corneobs and files of old newspapers in order to keep warm—or rather, to give ourselves the excuse for the illusion that we are not shivering. We are reduced to living principally on beans and musty cornmeal porridge. Last week's laundry cost forty dollars (two hundred lei), but in spite of exorbitant charges, laundries are closing on account of the lack of fuel and soap. Years ago I read somewhere that a perfect lady can take a bath in a pint of water. This consoling information I have passed on to Miss C. Her hands are so full of chilblains that she has to wear

gloves all the time, so is not particularly interested in washing ; but I have proved the correctness of the assertion—given time, patience and care, one can get fairly clean with a pint of hot water ! Barbu and Sybilica have a pailful a day to use in the folding rubber tub which has been a faithful friend in our journeyings. It is amazing to me how the children keep well. I confess to feeling somewhat “low in my mind” at the thought of our losses, but as long as we have our health, nothing should discourage us. B. won’t hear of repinings—we have had extraordinary good luck so far, and are much better off than hosts of our friends, who have found their houses absolutely empty—everything carried away by the Boches—and all their relatives dead or ill. Of some large families one member only survives—and, sadder still, many are mentally unhinged owing to their experiences.

CHRISTMAS TIME.

At a farewell for the remaining French officers and soldiers in Bucharest, who are soon to return to their native land, the C.’s gave a fête in one of the theatres. Ladies were requested to wear Roumanian costume, and it was a fairy-like scene to eyes unaccustomed to beauty and gaiety for so long. The Queen was radiantly lovely in her historic dress, the King smiling and happy. Recognizing me, His Majesty gazed at me in astonishment. “Did the experiences with the Bolsheviki turn your hair white ?” he asked me. Laughingly I explained to him that it had turned unromantically its present colour long before the Bolsheviki were heard of—an accident with fire had been the primary cause. It is true that on previous occasions when he had seen me I had worn a hat, and His Majesty had the impression I was a very fair blonde. Some British officers were among the guests, and they told me what a paradise

Bucharest seemed to them after coming through Bulgaria from Salonica. This Christmas fête ought to send them home with a pleasant memory of Roumania.

PARIS, FEBRUARY 1919.

When B. came home a fortnight ago and told me he was ordered to Paris as a member of one of the Commissions in connection with the Peace Conference, I refused to entertain the tiniest hope that we could accompany him. However, "All's well that ends well." Here we are! We got places in the first Orient Express to leave Bucharest; it was fully equipped and heated, as in pre-war days. In the restaurant car, when Sybilica saw oranges served at lunch, she clapped her hands and cried "Hurrah!" Our fellow-passengers smiled sympathetically—no one had seen fruit for many a moon. In Vienna the Bolsheviki made some unconcerted efforts to prevent our proceeding, but the well-armed force of French soldiers guarding each car platform apparently disheartened them, for they did not insist.

It seems unbelievable to be in a city where the rare motors are not battered wrecks, horses not starved skeletons, carriages not reeking with nauseous odours; where one can actually go to a clean restaurant, eat a decent meal and not spend a year's income for it; where streets are clean and free from hollow-eyed spectres of men and women, pitifully begging, wringing one's heart with their misery; houses warm, entire, and people well dressed.

With a sigh of relief I have discarded my two surviving, much-darned pairs of stockings and bestowed my travel-worn garments on the chambermaid. We feel ourselves rational beings once more—no longer (as I realized with a start the first day in these normal surroundings) always on the defensive, pigmies battling desperately against a

thousand odds in that frightful struggle where a million citizens of our country have perished !

But they have not died in vain ! B. was right about the " star " after all ! " Rumania Mare "—Greater Roumania—the national dream of centuries, has by their heroic sacrifices become a living reality !

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